

JN
276
.B7

NUNC COGNOSCO EX PARTE



TRENT UNIVERSITY
LIBRARY

HENRI BOURASSA

Independence

OR

Imperial Partnership ?

A study of *The Problem of the Commonwealth*,
by MR. LIONEL CURTIS.

"After this war, the relations between
the Dominions and the Mother Country
can never be the same again".

MR. BONAR LAW,
Secretary of States for Colonies.

PRICE: 25 cents

PRINTED AT *LE DEVOIR*

MONTREAL

1916

HENRI BOURASSA

Independence

OR

Imperial Partnership ?

A study of *The Problem of the Commonwealth*,
by MR. LIONEL CURTIS.

"After this war, the relations between
the Dominions and the Mother Country
can never be the same again".

MR. BONAR LAW,
Secretary of States for Colonies.

PRICE: 25 cents

PRINTED AT *LE DEVOIR*

MONTREAL

1916

JN 276. B7

Most of the following pages are a mere translation of a series of articles originally published in Le Devoir. Passing references of local or transient interest have been omitted. On the other hand, arguments in favour of Independence, in preference to Imperial partnership, have been developed at greater length than in the French text. With all the faults of a hurried work, necessarily incomplete, this short study may help the English-speaking public in reaching a clearer view of the aspirations of Canadian Nationalists.

Independence or Imperial Partnership?

I

“There must be a change”

“After this war the relations between the Dominions and the Mother Country can never be the same again.” This was written by Mr. BONAR LAW, in December 1915.¹ In September last, the Colonial Secretary gave expression to the same thought: “So far as the Dominions are concerned,” he said, “this war is being carried on under conditions which never existed in the world before, and which it is almost incredible to believe could have existed now. “These great Dominions are, in fact, independent states. We could not have compelled a single one of them to send a man or contribute a penny. But they have sent their best, not so much to help us as to help the Empire of which they are a part.”

“These conditions can never occur again. It requires great good-will and good sense on the part of both the Dominions and the authorities at home to enable the arrangement to work by which one set of men contribute lives and treasure and yet have no voice as to the way in which those lives and treasure are expended. That cannot continue. There must be a change. (Cheers)

“The war has done more, I believe, than many generations in other circumstances could have done in uniting the Empire. The people of this country are prepared to accept any system of closer union which the Dominions may desire to see adopted.”²

A few weeks later, the same minister repeated himself. Speaking of the participation of all the British nations in the war, he said: “It is not a possible arrangement that one set of them should contribute the lives and treasure of their people and have no voice in the way in which lives and treasure are expended.

¹ In his preface to the official work attributed to SIR MAX AITKEN: *Canada in Flanders*.

² Speech at a luncheon offered in London, September 13, to SIR EDWARD MORRIS, premier of Newfoundland; — report of the *Canadian Associated Press*.

"There must be a change. It rests chiefly with the men in the Dominions to find some method by which the unity which has characterised us in the war will be found to be as durable when peace comes¹."

The persistency, not only in thought but in the very words used, is quite significant. It indicates a matured opinion and a set policy in the mind of one who happens to be officially responsible both for the colonial policy of the Coalition ministry and the leadership of the dominant faction in the cabinet. Besides, the opinion expressed by Mr. BONAR LAW is amply justified in fact.

The active and intense participation of the self-governing Dominions in the war declared by Great Britain alone has revolutionised the political order of the Empire. The old régime of colonial autonomy and neutrality has ceased to exist. That it can never be resurrected is quite evident to all who have eyes to see and brains to think.

What is to be the new basis of the Imperial polity? That is the problem. To study it right now is the imperative duty of all true British citizens, whether in the United Kingdom or abroad. In England the problem is considered urgent. In Australia and New Zealand, in South Africa, in India, all serious minds are engrossed with the preoccupation of preparing the near future. Of all British communities composed of supposedly civilised beings, Canada alone does not appear to be concerned in the slightest degree with this huge problem, the most ponderous raised in the British Empire since the American Revolution. In the province of Quebec, especially, the conspiracy of silence is complete.

Curiously enough, the proof of the revolution accomplished, and the justification of nationalist resistances, are to be found exclusively in the words and deeds of British Imperialists. The leaders of the Imperialist school, in England, are infinitely more courageous, sincere and honest, than their colonial tools. As to the English Liberals, they, like their prototypes 'beyond the seas', appear to be stampeded, down-trodden and disarmed. Grumbling under the yoke, they follow, with reluctant docility, their Imperialist masters.

¹ Extract from a speech delivered in London, October 7; special report to the *Montreal Standard* of October 8th.

The 'Round Table'

Of all Imperialists, the most active and interesting are the groups of the '*Round Table*'. Their membership is not numerous, but they are an *élite*. They have representatives in every part of the Empire. Their quarterly, of the same name, is their means of communication. It has become the focus from which the gathered rays of Imperialism radiate through the highest spheres of thought in each of the 'sister-nations'.

A few years ago, the '*Round Table*' undertook a general and thorough inquiry into the ethnical, social and political conditions of the various countries of the Empire, their respective history, traditions and tendencies. The object of this vast work is to bring under light and put into activity all the elements susceptible of being used to strengthen the unity and hegemony of the British Empire.

The result of that inquiry will shape itself into the form of a large publication, under the title: '*The Project of a Commonwealth*'. The first volume has already appeared.¹ Far from being interrupted by the war, the work has received a fresh impetus. These intelligent and patriotic Englishmen do not consider that the work of destruction should prevent them, and all who think of the future, from preparing the reconstruction. Are they less devoted to the welfare of mankind, less concerned with the interests of the Empire, than our time-serving politicians and pressmen? I do not think so. But, evidently, they hold different views on the duties of governments and peoples. Like all men whose power of perception is not obscured by sordid interests or mean passions, they are thoroughly convinced that the war will necessarily precipitate the solution of the problem of Empire, and that each and every one of the British communities will soon be called upon to decide its future. Incredibly enough — as compared with our ultra-'loyal' and extra-blinded 'statesmen' — they consider that the decision should be *intelligent*, well matured and reasoned; and therefore preceded by something else than sonorous platitudes and stock-phrases on the 'liberties of peoples', 'triumph of democracy over autocracy', 'barbarity of the Huns' etc., etc. In their estimation, men responsible for public order, and peoples called

¹ MacMillan and Co., London; The MacMillan Company of Canada, Limited, Toronto.

upon to bear the consequences of their rulers' decisions, have a common and imperative duty to perform — that of studying *now* all the aspects of that vital problem.

In order to help in this preparatory work, the leading spirit of the *Round Table*, Mr. LIONEL CURTIS, has published, under the title '*The Problem of the Commonwealth*', a compendium of the larger work¹. Within its comparatively short compass, it is the most forceful and complete exposition of the Imperialist thesis, and, better still, the sincerest and most practical, that has come in the past twenty years under the eye of the present writer. That valuable work is even marked with a logical trend of reasoning, a lucid order of composition and argument, rarely to be found in Anglo-Saxon productions. The inspiration and the form are equally good. The book ought to be in the hands of all those Canadians who look to the future of our national life beyond the petty intrigues of party and the dirty manipulations of politicians.

Independence or Partnership, the only alternative

In the very first pages of the short preface, the problem is laid down in its amplest form: "The main contention is this, "that Dominion electorates must, in the not distant future, assume "control of foreign affairs, yet cannot do so without deciding irrevocably whether they are to keep or to renounce their status as "citizens of the British Commonwealth. In plain words, the issue, "as seen by the writer, is whether the Dominions are to become independent republics, or whether this world-wide Commonwealth "is destined to stand more closely united as the noblest of all "political achievements. If in truth these are the issues, no greater "have ever been raised by events for conscious decision." (p. vii).

Later on, Mr. CURTIS states that "those are the real alternatives" (p. 154), that "*there is no middle way*" (pp. 210 and 215), that a choice must be made "at once" (p. 209); — all of which he proves conclusively, with a plethora of evidence.

¹ London and Toronto, same publishers.

In the numerous quotations hereafter made, the italics, unless otherwise indicated, have been used by the present writer, merely to emphasise certain passages. Reference to the pages of the book is invariably indicated.

That the Dominions have the right, absolute and indisputable, to declare themselves independent whenever they will, he does not even dream of putting in doubt. More than once that principle is laid down in the book as an axiom in law. In fact, nobody, in England, would think of raising a doubt to the contrary.

The right of self-government is inherent in the quality of British subject. In fact, it is the very essence of British citizenship. As early as the seventeenth century, "so firmly established in the traditions of English society was representative government that Englishmen carried it with them to distant parts of the world, and expected the king to recognize it when they settled there. It was established as a matter of course in America when Englishmen settled there in the time of JAMES I" (p. 21). "The effect of the American secession on the attitude adopted by the British government to its younger colonies was profound. That Englishmen carried with them to new countries their native rights of self-government had been recognized." (p. 39)

To state that responsible government was "*instituted*" in Canada by Great Britain is inaccurate (p. 42). For the colonials as well as for the Englishmen, "self-government is a question not of privilege but rather of obligation. It is duty, not interest, which impels men to freedom..." (p. 124).

Principles of self-government

To withdraw from the king the "authority" to collect taxes "from the individual taxpayers," and substitute thereto the authority "of the nation as expressed through Parliament", was the first result, and has become the basic principle of representative government. (p. 14.)

In England, that principle has been acknowledged and applied for centuries. It was finally settled by the Revolution of 1646. The object — and the outcome — of the War of Independence, in America, was not to reopen the question of the division of authority between the King and Parliament, but simply to apportion the measure of authority to be exercised, in matters of taxation, by the Imperial parliament and the colonial legislatures.

In 1859, Canada asserted her absolute right to modify at her own leisure the basis of internal taxation, and even to tax *ad libitum* goods imported from the United Kingdom. On that occa-

sion, the leaders of the Canadian government, CARTIER and MACDONALD, boldly laid down the most 'dangerous' principles of nationalism. In the most peremptory language, they declared to the Colonial Secretary that "the Government of Canada acting for "its Legislature and people cannot, through those feelings of deference which they owe to the Imperial authorities, in any way waive or diminish the right of the people of Canada to decide for themselves both as to the mode and extent to which taxation shall be imposed. The Provincial Ministry are at all times ready "to afford explanations in regard to the acts of the Legislature to which they are party; but subject to their duty and allegiance to Her Majesty, their responsibility in all general questions of policy must be to the Provincial Parliament, by whose confidence they administer the affairs of the country; and in the imposition of taxation, it is so plainly necessary that the Administration and the people should be in accord, that the former cannot admit responsibility or require approval beyond that of the local Legislature. *Self-government would be utterly annihilated if the views of the Imperial Government were to be preferred to those of the people of Canada.*" (quoted pp. 48-49).¹

"The Colonists", says Mr. CURTIS, "are now responsible for "their own domestic affairs; that is to say, their national executives as well as their legislatures are responsible to them and not to the king" (p. 25). "As every one knows, the king never exerts his authority except upon the advice of ministers, whether those of the United Kingdom, or of the self-governing Dominions" (p. 88).

This principle had been laid down in 1865, as an axiom, by SIR JOHN MACDONALD, when urging in the Legislative Assembly the ratification of the Quebec Resolutions: "With us [British], the Sovereign, or in this country, the representative of the Sovereign, can act only on the advice of his ministers, those ministers being responsible to the people, through Parliament".²

What had brought that evolution in the government of colonies? The sole will of their inhabitants. "It was not, however, for the Imperial Parliament, in which the colonies were not re-

¹ Nearly twenty years later, the *Grits* brought against the Conservatives the never worn-out charge of 'disloyalty', because the National Policy then propounded and soon to be enacted, would 'endanger the British Connexion.' SIR JOHN MACDONALD merely replied, through his main organ: "So much the worse for British connexion!"

² *Confederation Debates*, p. 33.

“presented, to impose national institutions upon them. If British “North Americans, Australians, and South Africans were really to “manage their own national affairs, they had first of all to fashion “for themselves organs adequate for the purpose. The step from “provincial to national self-government was one which could only “be taken by themselves.” (pp. 66-67).

To the statesmen of Canada, as pioneers in that movement, Mr. CURTIS renders a well-deserved and sincere testimony.

The right and practice of self-government once acknowledged to the colonies, “power to alter their own constitutions was claimed “by colonial parliaments, and generally conceded by the *Colonial “Laws Validity Act, 1865.”* (p. 47)¹

The Dominions are “Separate Sovereignities”

In fact as well as in right, the self-governing colonies, or Dominions, “are *separate sovereignties*, for the same reason and to the “same extent as Scotland was a sovereignty separate from that of “England,” before the Act of Union (p. 234). “Canadians, Australians, and South Africans each think of themselves as nations distinct from the people of the British Isles, just as the British think of “themselves as a nation distinct from the citizens of the United “States.” (p. 68).

Far from condemning that “healthy instinct”, Mr. CURTIS takes it to be one of the most precious features of new nations. How he proposes to utilise it in the reconstruction of the Empire will be seen later.

Foreign affairs are the only field in which the autonomy of the Dominions remains restricted; and those restrictions exist for the mere reason that the Dominions themselves have not “finally insisted” upon their right to exercise their authority in those matters, as they did with regard to taxation or immigration. (pp. 75, 77, 216.)

The right of the Colonies to self-government once *acknowledged* — not *conceded* — their freedom “to decide all things for themselves, “*even the nature of their citizenship*, was accepted as *articulus stantis*

¹ That organic law was enacted in the same year that witnessed the agreement relative to war and defence, concluded between the Canadian delegates and the Imperial Government. Of that agreement more will be said in the following pages.

"aut cadentis Imperii, the cardinal principle of imperial policy." (p. 46). "The principle, which DURHAM inaugurated [in Canada, is] "of leaving self-governing colonies to assume whatever powers they might finally insist¹ upon taking." (p. 64).

That principle once established, "independence was regarded *"as the necessary goal of colonial self-government"* (p. 51.) — *"It is by their own free will that they [the colonies] have remained within the circle of this Commonwealth..."* (p. 73.) — "Each Dominion is severally free to manage and settle such matters for itself, provided that its people are willing to abandon their status as British citizens. *That is a question which they can and must decide for themselves.*" (p. 136). — "It is open at any moment for Dominion electors through their representatives to instruct their own governments to assume responsibility for the issues of peace and war, because the thing can be done by a stroke of the pen — *by a simple notification to all foreign capitals as well as to London.*" (p. 242.)

In 1883, Queensland annexed New Guinea. In 1910, New Zealand tried to shut her ports to all merchantmen from abroad, British as well as foreign. Those ultra-imperial performances were disallowed by the Imperial government. "Had the Queensland and New Zealand governments insisted on the right to annex "territories", or to control sea-trade coming to their ports, they had only to notify to foreign powers "their independence of the British Commonwealth" (p. 79.)

Military obligations of the Dominions

From the fact that the self-governing Dominions have of their own free will remained in the Empire, Mr. CURTIS draws the argument that they have a common interest in its general defence: "an attack made upon one is an attack made upon them all" (p. 73.) But he frankly admits that the British government has, on several instances, acknowledged its exclusive obligation to defend every portion of the Empire, while "no correlative declaration was ever demanded from the self-governing Dominions.... The matter, in a word, has never become the subject of bargain or

¹ In italics in the text.

“contract” (p. 85.) This goes beyond the mark. It is one of the rare mistakes *in fact* of that remarkable study.

The mutual obligations of Great Britain and Canada, in matters of war and defence, were the object of at least two explicit arrangements, in 1854 and 1865. The first SIR JOHN MACDONALD described as a “solemn agreement”. The second was a real treaty, negotiated and agreed upon by duly appointed representatives of both nations. Under these arrangements, the latter especially, it was formally agreed that Canada’s contribution was to be limited to her own “land defence”, while the British government “in return, fully acknowledged the reciprocal obligation of defending every portion of the “Empire” — naturally including Canada — “with all the resources “at its command”.¹ — “*Upon that basis the Confederation of all the Provinces of Canada was formed*”.²

The Dominions were “free as air to make or withhold” any contribution to the naval defence of the Empire. This Mr. CURTIS not only admits without hesitation (p. 86): he accepts it as a rigorous consequence of the national status of the Dominions, as the natural outcome of the evolution through which they “became nations” (chap. VI).

Such was the political order of the Commonwealth when war broke out.

Possible neutrality of the Dominions

“The Dominions were at least as remote from the storm-centre “as the United States, and by declaring their neutrality, a *declaration*

¹ Declaration of EDWARD CARDWELL, Colonial Secretary, in his despatch to VISCOUNT MONCK, dated 17th June 1865. That despatch contains a full recital of the agreement and the preliminary negotiations as well. (*Imperial Accounts and Papers*, 1865, Vol. XXXVII, p. 437.)

² Words of SIR ALEXANDER CAMPBELL, — one of the Fathers of Confederation, — at the Colonial Conference of 1887. That statement was neither questioned nor qualified by any representative of the British government. These and numerous other proofs of the agreement have been compiled by the present writer in his book : “*Que devons-nous à l'Angleterre?*” Montreal, 1915.

The existence of similar agreements between the British and the various Australasian governments could be proven with equal ease. All those agreements were based upon the principle then universally accepted and eminently equitable, that the Colonies or Dominions, having no responsibility in the conduct of foreign affairs, had no military obligations beyond such help as they could give in the defence of their respective territories.

"which the enemy would most gladly have recognized, might have placed themselves in the same position" (p. 3).¹

"A still easier course" for the Dominions "would have been to have confined themselves to the defence of their own territories against any attempt of the enemy to violate them" (p. 3).

Treason! What thunder of wrath, if these 'disloyal' utterances had come from a Canadian Nationalist! For a milder expression of the same views, *Le Devoir* has been threatened with suppression; the 'internment' of its director has been demanded. That I should be shot or hanged at once was even charitably suggested by the most enthusiastic among our champions of 'liberty against tyranny', of 'democracy against autocracy'. Will they suggest a similar cure for the 'vagaries' of the chief editor of the *Round Table*? Or is it, as usual, that what is 'criminal' and 'seditious' in the mouth of a French Canadian Nationalist is perfectly innocuous, and even praiseworthy, under the pen of an English Imperialist?

59111245
"The moment war was in sight, such ideas" of independence or neutrality "were absolutely forgotten". This instantaneous change of thought Mr. CURTIS, naturally enough, hails with joy and pride. But he at least has the frankness to admit that the Dominions had a perfect right to remain neutral, or to limit their participation to the defence of their respective territories. On this he does not even dream of raising the slightest doubt — no more than as regards the right of the Dominions to choose their own future: independence, imperial partnership or any other form of national status. Is it necessary to add that such has been, for fifty years and over, the doctrine universally accepted and taught in England?

The Revolution accomplished — Reconstruction is imperative

In sharing voluntarily in a war in which most of them were but indirectly concerned, the various nations of the Commonwealth "are radically changing their relations to each other. Before the "outbreak of this war the common defence had nowhere been

¹ It is rather interesting to compare this statement with a similar declaration made by Mr. HUGHES, premier of Australia, in Ottawa, in February last. The Germans, he said, were prepared to treat Canada and Australia as independent nations. In the mouth of a "mere colonial" politician, as once expressed by the London correspondent of a Montreal journal, this could be interpreted as a mere piece of colonial bluff. But from the pen of the chief editor of the *Round Table*, it becomes a serious assertion.

“recognized as a first charge on the public resources, except in the British Isles. And this fact is inseparably connected with another. Responsibility for the issues of peace and war has nowhere been assumed, except by the people of the United Kingdom. Whenever peace returns, the first of these conditions can scarcely be revived, and cannot in any case be maintained. It will then be plain that the liberties which have been saved cannot be secured for the future, unless the burden involved is recognized as a first charge on the revenues, not of one, but of all the free communities of the Commonwealth, *in peace as well as in war*¹. Imperial ministers will be forced to confess that they cannot in future preserve the Commonwealth inviolate, unless the cost is distributed on some principle of equality through all the communities whose freedom is involved. The financial relations which previously existed between these countries in the peace which preceded this war, will be out of the question if the peace which follows it is to last. Facts will have made them impossible; but the moment this comes to be recognized it will be seen that *the financial relations of the older and younger communities cannot be revised without also revising their political relations.*” (pp. 7, 8.)

The levying of taxes, the appropriation and control of public funds, under the immediate authority of a parliament elected by the taxpayers, are the essentials of the British system of government.

Imperial defence necessitates an imperial budget. If the colonies share in the defence they must also share in the budget. That this budget should remain at the discretion of an executive responsible to a parliament elected by the sole electors of the United Kingdom the self-governing Dominions would not tolerate much longer. This basic idea crops up in almost every chapter of the book.

Even before the war, the necessity for a change was growing. The war has made it inevitable. The colonies themselves will claim a share in the government of the Commonwealth. Words of SIR ROBERT BORDEN, SIR CLIFFORD SIFTON, MR. ANDREW FISHER, late premier, now High Commissioner of Australia, are all quoted to that effect. “If I had stayed in Scotland”, stated Mr. FISHER, in January last, “I should have been able to heckle my mem-

¹ In italics in the text.

"ber on questions of Imperial policy, and to vote for or against him
"on that ground.' I went to Australia, I have been Prime Minister.
"But all the time I have had no say whatever about Imperial policy,
"no say whatever. *Now that can't go on. There must be some chan-*
"*ge.*"¹ (pp. 9-10).

The present condition is "intolerable"

If the colonies do not demand that change, they will lose their
dignity as British nations. Under the régime of colonial neutrality,
they bore no share of the imperial burden, because they had willingly
left to the British government exclusive authority in all that
pertains to the external relations of the Empire². That order of
things has ceased to exist. By taking an aggressive part in this
war, the self-governing Dominions have destroyed it. Even before
receiving any share of imperial authority, the Dominions have
accepted to share in the burdens of Empire, and this to a degree
that would have stunned our predecessors. What has resulted
therefrom? "In matters of peace and war, the first, greatest,
"and most comprehensive of all public interests, South Africans
"are subject in fact as well as in law to a Government which exists,
"not in Pretoria nor in Capetown, but in London. And so it is
"with Canada, Australia, and New Zealand. It is in London and
"not at Ottawa, Melbourne or Wellington that their ultimate
"destiny is made or marred. They may manage their own
"domestic affairs, regulate their commerce, create forces by land
"and sea, and do anything they please, short of attempting to handle
"for themselves the ultimate issues of national life and death.
"Those issues, the moment they are raised, must be left to a Gov-
"ernment in which they have no more voice than the peoples of
"India, of Egypt, or of Fiji. So far as the first, last and greatest
"of all national interests is concerned they are not self-governing
"Dominions. They are simply dependencies, and no thinking

¹ The *Times*, January 31, 1916. As may be noticed, the last sentence is literally identical with that twice used by Mr. BONAR LAW and reproduced at the opening of this study. Had Mr. CURTIS published his book a few weeks later, he could have added to those testimonies the numerous declarations of a similar and even stronger character made by the present premier of Australia, Mr. HUGHES.

² "... choosing to abrogate that part of their full autonomy which relates to foreign affairs" — SIR FREDERICK POLLOCK, quoted by Mr. JOHN S. EWART in his *Kingdom Paper* No. 1, page 3.

“man can face this conclusion and yet believe that communities like “Canada and Australia can long continue to accept that position.” (p. 93).

This coincides absolutely with the statement made, in 1910, by MR. BORDEN, then leader of the Conservative opposition in Ottawa: “*I do not think that such would be a tolerable condition.* I do not “believe the people of Canada would for one moment submit to “such a condition”.¹

Under the pressure of fear and excitement caused by the war, thanks also to the ‘concubinage’ of both parties, Canada finds herself, today, in a situation far less “*tolerable*” than that described by SIR ROBERT BORDEN, in 1910. That a deep and violent reaction is bound to follow MR. CURTIS fully expects; and in this, his views are shared by all clear sighted men. What is coming SIR ROBERT BORDEN himself has, in several instances, made quite clear to the British authorities.

To prepare the work of to-morrow is precisely the chief concern of the *Round Table* group.

Nationalism and Imperialism

That independence would be “*the simplest*” solution, MR. CURTIS frankly admits; but the majority in the several British communities, he thinks, wish to preserve their British — not English — citizenship. In this he is probably right, for the time being, at any rate. The solution must then be the only “real alternative”: a combination of the principle of local autonomy with the essentials of British citizenship; in other words, an adaptation of colonial Nationalism to the necessities of British Imperialism. This is the interesting feature of the thesis — as interesting as the task is arduous. The possibility of squaring that vast circle MR. CURTIS endeavours to demonstrate with the same candour, logic, and robust simplicity that characterise his exposition of the fundamental facts and principles of the British Commonwealth, such as it was before the revolution was accomplished.

With CHAMBERLAIN, LORD GREY, LORD MILNER, and all other leaders of the Imperialist school, MR. CURTIS lays down as a basic principle, that no new form of Imperial constitution can and should

¹ *Debates House of Commons*, 1910-11, col. 227-8.

restrain the full measure of local autonomy now enjoyed and exercised by the Dominions; nor should it hamper the free development of the national character peculiar to each of the British nations.

Having briefly recalled the main features of other federated states, such as the United States, Germany, Austria-Hungary, Switzerland, he adds: "The British Commonwealth, however, is distinguished from all these cases by the fact that it is made up of territories which, instead of being contiguous, are as widely separated as so many territories on the face of this earth can well be. So far it has succeeded in combining them as parts of one international state, and has done so by consciously abandoning the idea of uniting them as parts of one nation. Its whole system is based upon the assumption that Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and South Africa are each free to develop a nationalism of their own as distinct from English nationalism, as English nationalism itself is distinct from that of the Americans." (p. 55).

This peculiarity of the British Commonwealth is not only in harmony with the principles of British public law: it is essentially characteristic of young nationalities. To try and put a stop to the growth of that born instinct would be both useless and pernicious.

"The inhabitants of all new countries aspire to produce a distinctive nationality of their own, and are eminently right in doing so. It is a healthy instinct which leads them to despise those who have no higher ambition than to reproduce the nationality developed under the conditions of a distant land and a different climate. Canadians, Australians, and South Africans are jealous of attempts to anglicize their manners and institutions. But really their fears are groundless. Their local environment, and above all the faculty they have acquired of regulating their own social development, invariably prove too strong for such projects. National individuality "cometh not with observation," but grows of itself. Certain great principles of life, such as the principle of self-government, will, as time goes on, become more and more a common inheritance of mankind. But side by side with this spread of ideas, which gradually become more generally applicable to human society everywhere, will be seen the development of national types appropriate to different countries, to their various climates, and to the several histories of the people inhabiting them. In the British Commonwealth, the United Kingdom, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and South Africa are all isolated from one

“another as decisively as it is possible for any different countries
“to be. Socially they are isolated, and will, whatever happens,
“develop distinctive characteristics in their peoples. Their several
“individualities will conform increasingly to their several environ-
“ments. Different and clearly marked nationalities will develop and,
“happily, no power on earth can now stop the process. Any attempt
“to impose British nationalism on the world at large would have
“been defeated by Nature herself as surely as the attempt to impose
“German nationalism will be. The world is richer for the variety
“of types.” (pp. 68-70).

What else have we, Nationalists — the *true* ones, I mean; those who have never abdicated or betrayed — what else have we stated, maintained and struggled for? These statements contain the essence of *all* the arguments used by us, in twenty years time, either against the idea of subordinating Canada's interests to the exigencies of Imperial Anglo-Saxondom, or against all attempts to ‘anglicise’ the French Canadians in Ontario or elsewhere — a policy that has been pursued under different forms ever since the conquest of New France.

If assimilation is bad for the British Commonwealth, it is
equally bad for the Canadian Commonwealth.

From that starting point, MR. CURTIS goes on to prove his
main contention, that the Dominions must choose between absolute
independence or full Imperial partnership.

In British lands, nationality and self-government are inseparable: no nationality without self-government; no self-government without a distinct nationality. What are the essentials of British self-government? Irresponsibility of the Sovereign; responsibility
of the executive to parliament, responsibility of parliament to the
people; above all, the full exercise of all national powers of govern-
ment. So far, the inhabitants of the Dominions have been content with their powers of internal government. “They elect the Par-
“liament which regulates their domestic affairs but not the Par-
“liament which regulates their foreign affairs. In order to achieve
“responsible government, they must either elect members to both
“Parliaments” — as Ireland would do under the long postponed Home Rule — “or entrust the conduct of their foreign affairs to the
“Parliament they already elect” (p. 17). In other words, the Dominions must choose between straight independence, or full partnership with the United Kingdom in the government as well

as in the defence, of the Empire. *There is no other alternative* (pp. 154, 209-10, 215).

Menace to colonial autonomy

If the colonials shirk that duty and refuse to make their choice, they will soon be incapable of preserving the scanty measure of autonomy they now enjoy. "Citizens who have actually developed the capacity for government will tend to lose it unless it is "used to the full" (p. 20).

This timely reflexion deserves to be carefully meditated in the light of recent events, of what has happened especially in the last two years. Who, in CARTIER'S or MACDONALD'S time, thought that the day would ever come when Canada would raise an army of five hundred thousand men, to be kept up in Europe at Canada's cost, for England's benefit, and that the full and absolute command of that army would be abandoned to British officers, under the exclusive authority of the British government? Who, but five years ago — with the exception of a few 'hare-brained' Nationalists — ever suggested that, by 1914, the British government would have seized the whole mercantile navy of Canada, regulated the kind and quantity of Canadian exports, and dictated to the Canadian government, not only war tactics, but also numerous measures of a purely administrative character? The war has practically transformed the governments of the so-called 'sister-nations' into mere executive bureaux of the Imperial government.

"On paper their autonomy in local affairs remained as before " 'absolute, unfettered, and complete.'¹ But in practice those "affairs were all profoundly modified by the exigencies of war. "Schemes of development were cancelled, projects of social reform "were suspended, and the people of the Dominions suddenly "discovered that the issues of peace and war are an interest which "overmasters all others. They have found that until they control "that interest *their control of all others is purely provisional.*" (p. 110).

If the Dominions wish to remain within the Imperial circle, and at the same time preserve their dignity — and liberty — as self-governing nations, they must *demand* and *exercise* the same authority as that exercised by the United-Kingdom on foreign

¹ Words of MR. ASQUITH at the Imperial Conference, 1911.

affairs and the government of India, the great dependencies and the posts of strategical importance, such as Malta or Gibraltar. They must have, in partnership with the United Kingdom, full control of the Imperial budget, mainspring of Imperial power.

Under the present chaotic system, the Dominions are at the complete mercy of a group of politicians elected by the people of the British Isles. The power to launch them in war is in the hands of these politicians. In fact they are now deeply involved in the most terrific of modern wars, because of the sole action of the British government. If the Dominions persist in staying in that state of willing subserviency, peace will be made above their heads by the same English politicians. "In the bed there made for them, not by their own ministers, but by those of England, they will have to lie; and whether it is made of thorns or of roses is *their* interest no less than that of the people of the British Isles." Even now, secret negotiations are constantly going on between the British government and foreign powers. Of these the Dominion governments know nothing. "Conditions of the peace are already being settled in advance, and without consultation with Dominion governments. Their representatives will not be admitted to the conference at which that peace is finally made. The plenipotentiary who will go to it will be a minister responsible only to the people of the British Isles through the parliament they elect" (p. 113). For his statesmanship, good or bad, he will be answerable only to the electors of the English, Welsh, Scottish and Irish boroughs and counties. Those electors will pass final and exclusive judgment, not only on the conditions of peace made for them, but also upon those affecting Canada and the other dependencies, so derisively called 'sister-nations'.

"In the foreign affairs of this Commonwealth the British have retained a monopoly of power close almost as that which Athenians wielded in the empire they founded. In matters of peace and war it is literally closer than that which the Prussians exercise in Germany to-day" (p. 217).

Here is one point at least upon which our concocters of catching stock-phrases will hardly make us believe that we are fighting for "democracy against autocracy!"

“That authority cannot be shared”

On the other hand, supreme control over those matters — war, foreign affairs, imperial budget, great dependencies — cannot be divided between several parliaments. This practical truth MR. CURTIS clearly demonstrates with the same power of logic which permeates the whole of his study.

“The handling of foreign affairs must rest in the hands of a single ministry, which cannot hope to shift the blame of miscarriage from themselves, and that ministry must be answerable for all the communities involved by its action in peace or war. One authority must be subject to blame and also to dismissal. On the same principle, the power to dismiss the cabinet must rest with a single parliament, and therefore with a single electorate, and any body of voters which elects one parliament is one electorate.” (p. 102).

To which is added, in a footnote, this most sensible reflexion:

“Since these words were printed it has become apparent that the miscarriage of Allied diplomacy in the Balkans was largely due to the fact that the cabinets in London, Paris, Petrograd, and Rome were unable to make definite proposals to Balkan Powers until the terms had been settled and accepted by all four. What would the position have been if London could have agreed to nothing without the concurrence of Ottawa, Melbourne, Wellington and Pretoria?” (p. 102).

From that inexorable condition of things MR. CURTIS draws the most plausible explanation so far given of the famous declaration made by MR. ASQUITH at the Imperial Conference of 1911: “That authority cannot be shared.” Imperial authority cannot be “shared”, in the sense that it cannot be *divided*. But the body through which it is exercised could and should be truly and directly responsible to *all* the self-governing nations of the Empire.

The Imperial Conference is a sham

Can the principle of self-government be reconciled with the necessity of having *one* supreme control over the general interests of the Commonwealth?

In some people’s minds, this is precisely the object and the outcome of the Imperial Conference. This delusion MR. CURTIS

tears down without the slightest respect or precaution. His criticism equals and even surpasses all that I have written on the subject.¹ Of all the solemn phrases used by politicians, British or Colonials, to magnify the power and prestige of that 'meeting of governments with governments,' he merely says that "half truths" cannot "be turned into truths by repeating them often enough" (p. 95). A form of Imperial partnership the Conference is not and cannot be, because it is not responsible either to parliaments or to the people. In spite of all 'consultations', open or secret, the execution and control of imperial policy remain 'absolute, unfettered and complete' in the hands of the British cabinet.

"Under British institutions responsible government involves "the responsibility of cabinets to parliaments, but it involves "something more. Its real essence lies in the responsibility of the "parliament to the people for the choice of the ministers who conduct "their affairs" (p. 103.)—"In settling questions of peace and war "for a quarter of the human race, the Imperial Government must "*always* be responsible, as it now is, to *one* Imperial Parliament."—In this MR. ASQUITH was right; but "he refrained from adding that "in settling peace and war for a quarter of the human race, including "Canadians, Australians, New Zealanders, and South Africans, the "Imperial government is actually responsible to an electorate "confined to the people of the British Isles." ... That "*system* "violates not merely a necessary condition of responsible government "but the first and most essential of all its conditions. . . . If responsibility "for foreign affairs can never be shared by the Imperial Parliament "with an Imperial Council sitting in London,² *a fortiori* it cannot "be shared with four Dominion parliaments, sitting in Ottawa, "Melbourne, Wellington and Cape Town" (p. 104).

That the same principle applies to the command of the Imperial army and navy, and the control of the Imperial budget, MR. CURTIS has no difficulty in making clear.

¹ *La conférence impériale et le rôle de M. Laurier.* — Montréal, 1911.

² This was the dubious palliative suggested by SIR JOSEPH WARD, premier of New Zealand, and easily rejected by the combined opposition of MR. ASQUITH and SIR WILFRID LAURIER.

'National' fleets of the Dominions

The case of the Dominion navies is settled in a few paragraphs. "The two Dominion navies which were actually called into existence were distinguished from each other and the British navy by the words 'Canadian' and 'Australian'. But the title of "His Majesty' applied in common to all three, and the white ensign hoisted at the stern of each ship proclaimed the fact that "Canadians and Australians were committed to risking their fleets in any war declared in the name of His Britannic Majesty. "The idea that the King could declare war on the advice of his British ministers, and simultaneously declare peace on the advice of Australian or Canadian ministers, was confined to men whose legal notions had obscured their common sense and blinded them to political facts.... The King would have to choose between rejecting the advice either of his British or Dominion ministers, and that in such an event he would be guided by British ministers is not in question."—"And the same is applicable to everything done or said with reference to issues of peace and war. Such acts must be taken by the King on the advice of his British ministers. Dominion ministers would, of course, be free to advise, but their advice, if contrary, would not prevail. The Dominions, so long as they remained British Dominions, and their people, until they renounced "their status as British citizens, would be involved in war or res-trained from war on the advice of ministers responsible solely to the people of the British Isles." (pp. 89-90).

At last! Here is a true Englishman, honest, sincere and candid. What a rest from the deluge of lies and contradictions poured on us, for at least seven or eight years, by our politicians!

In short, the Conference is a sham; in substituting for the old British right of representation the so-called principle of "consultation," subordinated to the absolute supremacy of the British cabinet, it simply leads to "the negation of responsible government" (p. 122). Any system offering to the Dominions no other advantage than the opportunity of exercising a vague and indirect 'influence' would have the same result. As WASHINGTON truly said, "influence is not government" (p. 134).

"Once more the older and younger communities of the Commonwealth are engaged in a mortal combat with despotism, to vindicate the principle of self-government, not merely for themselves

“but also for mankind” (pp. 6, 7). The war once over, will they be content to remain deprived of the privilege they are now professedly vindicating for others? Will they stay in their present condition of abject servitude? They have not the right to do so. “For “men who are fit for it, self-government is a question not of privilege “but rather of obligation. It is duty, not interest, which impels “men to freedom, and duty, not interest, is the factor which turns “the scale in human affairs” (p. 124).

The man who speaks thus is not of the common politician’s brand.

II

Real partnership : one army, one navy, one budget

Short of absolute independence, there is, there can be, for the Dominions, but one solution: Imperial partnership. To be real and complete, while remaining in accord with the fundamental principles of the Commonwealth, Imperial partnership can be accomplished only by the creation of an Imperial parliament, elected by the people of all self-governing countries in the Empire, coupled with an Imperial cabinet responsible to that parliament and to no others. The jurisdiction of those new legislative and executive bodies must be confined to the general interests of the Commonwealth. The internal affairs of the United Kingdom would remain under the exclusive control of the present government and parliament in London, just as the affairs of Canada, Australia, New Zealand and South Africa are now — or rather *were*, before the war — under the exclusive control of the governments and parliaments sitting respectively at Ottawa, Melbourne, Wellington and Pretoria.

“Drastic as the change seems it is not so drastic a change as “the disruption of the Commonwealth, and when it is realised that *those are the real alternatives*, some leaders, not in one party only, “but perhaps in all, would be found to support it” (pp. 153-4).

To understand the working of the proposed system, one must first realise “the inter-relation of foreign affairs, defence, and finance” (chap. xvi).

“The cost of naval defence and the responsibility for the conduct of foreign affairs hang together,” once said SIR HENRY CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN.¹ Of course, by “naval defence”, he meant the general defence of the Empire, of which the navy is the principal weapon.

“We are absolutely safe”, says MR. CURTIS, “in assuming “that no cabinet will ever be formed for the conduct of Imperial “affairs which does not include the First Lord of the Admiralty, the “Secretary of State for War and an Imperial Minister of Finance,

¹ Opening speech of the Colonial Conference, 1907 — [Cd. 3523].

“as well as the Foreign Secretary” (p. 156). For these high functionaries are in charge of that imperial authority which “cannot be shared”.

The war budget must, of necessity, be under the absolute and exclusive authority of the Imperial parliament and cabinet. A full liberty of action must be given to the men loaded with the responsibility of securing the material safety of the Commonwealth. In peace as in war, they must be in a position to respond to all the exigencies of the army and navy, they must have constantly at their disposal a financial mechanism as simple as possible, secured and abundant revenues, and, above all, a boundless credit. The credit of the Commonwealth will be maintained in so far only as the State creditors *know* that, as a last resort, the private property of all citizens, in all parts of the Commonwealth, are liable to be distrained for the payment of the State debts.

“We are driven, therefore, by an inexorable chain of reasoning “to the conclusion that British citizens in the Dominions cannot “secure control of foreign affairs, and achieve responsible government, except by a change which renders Dominion taxpayers “liable to distraint by ministers in charge of Imperial affairs for “monies voted by the Imperial Parliament. No juggling with “constitutional terms will help us to evade that conclusion.” (p.160).

“On the other hand, such proposals must interfere as little as “possible with the power of parliaments responsible to the several “Dominions of determining the incidence of taxation between man “and man, each within their several jurisdictions.” (p. 165).

That the taxpayers, either in the United Kingdom or in the Dominions, will ever renounce their power “absolute, unfettered and complete” to determine the nature, the amount and the rate of public taxation — whether imperial, national, federal or provincial—there is no likelihood, in spite of the present state of wild fever, and the renaissance of colonial subserviency it has produced.

Was it not BURKE who said, nearly a century and a half ago, that there were two things for which Anglo-Saxons had always fought, would always fight: their individual liberty and the control of their money?

From that dilemma, MR. CURTIS extricates himself by a very ingenious combination (chap. xvii and xviii).

Imperial budget

First, there is to be but one war budget for the whole Imperial commonwealth; whether as regards annual expenditures or loans, the amount of the budget will be determined by the Imperial parliament, in which all the partner-states will be represented. The share payable by each country will be calculated according to its population, or better still, according to the total income of its inhabitants. In case of refusal or neglect to pay, the Governor could be instructed not to sign Dominion warrants until all Imperial claims are settled; and, in last resort, the Customs or any other collecting department of the refractory government could be seized by an Imperial commissioner, under order from the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council. In his consideration of extreme possibilities, MR. CURTIS stops there. But what of further resistances? Evidently, the army and navy of the Commonwealth would have to ensure the execution of the award.

All this strikingly resembles the means frequently adopted by conquering nations to make good their claims against China or the Barbaric states of Africa. The parallel need not excite wonder. In spite of all delusions and resounding platitudes on “British liberty” and “British democracy”, imperial power, with the British as with all peoples, must finally rest on the strength of the ‘mailed fist’ and the ‘big stick’.

For having told us the plain truth, MR. CURTIS deserves credit and thankfulness.

Of course, as to the executive means adopted by each partner-nation to meet its imperial obligations,— what MR. CURTIS calls “the incidence of taxation as between one taxpayer and another” — that would be left to the discretion of local parliaments. In other words, each partner would be free to choose the instrument by which it would be scorched for the maintenance of imperial power and glory.

Apportionment of the burden

To give an idea of the working of the proposed system, MR. CURTIS has figured out some interesting statistics. As a starting point, he takes the last war budgets before the war. In the twelve months of the budget year 1913-14, the self-governing countries of the Empire had spent, on war services, the following amounts of public money, giving the *per capita* ratio indicated in the last column:

	Expenditure	Population	Per cap.
Canada	£ 2,703,603	7,300,000	£0: 7: 4.9
Australia	4,081,589	4,500,000	0:18: 1.7
New Zealand	765,324	1,100,000	0:13:10.8
South Africa	1,345,031	6,000,000	0: 4: 5.6
United Kingdom	72,346,277	45,500,000	1:11: 9.6
<hr/>			
Total	£81,241,824	64,400,000	

Had the total expenditure been apportioned equally among the 64,400,000 inhabitants of these five countries, the ratio *per capita* would have been £1:5:2.7, and the share payable by each country, as follows:

Canada	£ 9,180,326
Australia	5,686,928
New Zealand	1,381,111
South Africa	7,555,490
United Kingdom	57,437,969
<hr/>	
Total	£81,241,824

With regard to South Africa, especially, on account of its large primitive population of negroes, the injustice of that basis of calculation is obvious. It is therefore suggested to correct it by calculating the *paying capacity* of each country, according to the *total income* of its inhabitants. This would be done every five years by a board of assessors on which all partner-nations would be represented. Suppose a body of that kind had determined, before 1913, that the paying capacity of the five countries was in the following proportions:

Canada	5.5
Australia	5.3
New Zealand	5.4
South Africa	1
United Kingdom	6

Then, by a series of mathematical operations minutely exemplified by MR. CURTIS, the apportionment would have given the following results:

Canada.....	£ 9,347,908
Australia.....	5,552,867
New Zealand.....	1,382,978
South Africa.....	1,396,948
United Kingdom.....	63,561,123

Total..... £81,241,824

This would have covered the *total* war expenditure of the whole partnership, and designedly so. “The whole conception which “distinguishes local from Imperial defence is a false one”, contends MR. CURTIS (p. 167). Nevertheless he admits that each partner would have to spend a certain amount of money for police and various other defensive works of a purely local character. These would be covered by subsidies paid from the Imperial exchequer to the several partners, say, in the following proportions:

Canada.....	£ 1,000,000
Australia.....	3,000,000
New Zealand.....	500,000
South Africa.....	1,000,000
United Kingdom.....	3,395,547

Total..... £ 8,895,547

Much could be said on the doubtful equity of these figures. But let that pass, for the moment. These sums being deducted from the previous apportionment, the net contribution of each partner to the Imperial war chest would have been, in 1913-14, as follows:

Canada.....	£ 8,347,908
Australia.....	2,552,867
New Zealand.....	882,978
South Africa.....	396,948
United Kingdom.....	60,165,576

Total..... £72,346,277

Which total is the exact amount paid, in that year, by the United Kingdom alone.

Canada's share of the burden

In that apportionment, Canada would have been the heaviest sufferer. While each of the other countries would have paid much less — except New Zealand, with a very slight increase — the contribution of Canada would have trebled.

To limit the comparison to Canada and the United Kingdom, Canada would have paid £5,644,305 *more* than she actually spent, and the United Kingdom £12,180,701 *less*.

To the war budget would naturally be added the expenditure required to maintain the Foreign Office as well as the various embassies and consulates, and also the administration of the numerous stations, colonies and dependencies to be abandoned — as will be seen later — to the care of the partnership. The cost of these services MR. CURTIS has not calculated. It runs up in the millions of pounds sterling. Of that, England would pay less and the Dominions more.

That the financial basis of the partnership will not be detrimental to shrewd Old England may be taken for granted. Two facts, nevertheless, have to be remembered. First, the basis of calculation suggested by MR. CURTIS is purely suggestive: it is open to discussion and susceptible of much readjustment. Secondly, it is far preferable, even as it is, to the present chaotic system, under which Canada has spent, under false pretences, millions after millions of war subsidies that are of no use whatever in the war. Suppose that in the last ten years Canada had paid a regular war contribution to an imperial chest, under the control and management of a body composed of elected representatives of all the nations of the Empire: is it not likely that a true and efficient organisation of the war forces of the Empire could have been set on foot, instead of the loose and chaotic system under which war-mongers have enriched themselves in every country of the Empire?

If bleed we must for the glory of Empire, let our blood and money be turned to some other and better purposes than replenishing the private exchequer of a band of 'patriotic' free-booters.

Grave defects of the proposed system

Even as it is, the financial plan suggested by MR. CURTIS lends itself to substantial criticism. Let us examine briefly its main flaws.

First, it does not take into account the peculiar geographical situation of the several countries of the Empire. In defining the constitutional principles bound to prevail in the *political* organisation of the Commonwealth, MR. CURTIS, as we have seen, takes that feature as one of the fundamental *facts* to be considered. Why ignore it in determining the *financial* factor of the association, inseparably connected as it is, in his own opinion, with the political factor?

Some of those countries are far more exposed to foreign aggression than their partners. This is the case of England. Should not the English pay more for that additional risk? Others cannot expect from the association any *effective* help against their most redoubtable aggressors. Such is the case of Canada, as a neighbour to the United States of America, against whom the whole power of the British Empire would be impotent. Why must Canada pay, for a doubtful protection, as much as her partners for a safe guarantee?

Evidently, in that order of things, the future association appears to the *Round Table* group as a kind of mutual insurance company. But, in matters of insurance, whether against the risk of death, or fire, burglary, etc., experience has demonstrated that premiums must be rated according to the nature and situation of the risk. All systems based on any other principle have failed — not to speak of the bitter quarrels between despoiled associates or clients.

Danger of unjust taxation

Of course, as MR. CURTIS rightly observes, “no practical reformer hopes for a scheme of taxation which is perfectly just” (p. 174). But, further, he adds with equal reason: “*Any system of taxation is dangerous in direct proportion to its injustice*” (p. 176). If the ‘*injustice*’ is felt, with or without ground, by one nation, in its political relations with other nations separated from her by the numerous divergencies so aptly described by MR. CURTIS, the ‘*danger*’ is much greater than in cases of injustice as between one class of citizens and the other, in the same community.

The ‘*injustice*’ of an apportionment of imperial burdens based exclusively on population is so obvious that the suggestion is immediately made to have it corrected by a calculation of the *paying capacity* of taxpayers in each associated country. This would presumably reduce the proportionate contribution of South Africans to nearly one sixth of that paid by Canadians, Australians, etc.

The sole reason given to justify that enormous disproportion is the prevalence in South Africa of a large negro element. Is it sure that the manifest reluctance of the Boers to assume their share of imperial burdens has not weighed, unconsciously perhaps, on MR. CURTIS' mind?¹ Would it not be equally wise to think also of the Irish and the French-Canadians, not to speak of the Indians?

The corrected basis of calculation suggested by MR. CURTIS is still very crude. In order to reach a fair estimation of the *paying capacity* of each country, he proposes to assess its total income. This is hardly sufficient. The *paying capacity* of a nation or individual, for public purposes, depends not on the income or salary earned, but on the surplus left to that nation or individual, after the necessary cost of national or individual life has been deducted from the receipts. For example, the *paying capacity* of a labourer earning *three dollars* a day and forced to spend *two dollars and a half* to keep up his family and himself, is *fifty per cent* less than the *paying capacity* of another labourer who earns only *two dollars*, but can get the necessaries of life for *one dollar*. The *paying capacity* of the former, for state purposes, is fifty cents a day; that of the latter, one dollar.

A thorough study of the general economic conditions of life and labour, in each associated country, would therefore be the first duty of the Imperial assessors, before they attempted to value the paying capacity of each partner. And as those conditions of life, in new countries especially, change considerably from year to year, that preliminary work would have to be made before each assessment. Otherwise, flagrant "injustices" are sure to crop up very soon, with all their consequent "dangers".

Special obligations and indirect contributions

Another equally important point, suggested by the same principle of equity and safety, is the necessity of valuating the imperative *obligations* peculiar to each country. The *paying capacity* of a nation — and, in the final resort, of the individual taxpayer — is directly affected by the exigencies of its geographical and international situation. In calculating, *grosso modo*, the subsi-

¹ That reluctance has shown itself quite strongly in the present war. The Botha government, in spite of the inflammatory appeals of the loyalist party, has persistently refused to pay to the small number of recruits for the Imperial Army more than one quarter of the pay allotted to the South African militia.

dy payable to Australia on account of local defence, MR. CURTIS has kept account of that feature. Has he fully measured the exigencies of Canada's situation? What about the open frontier of four thousand miles, separating Canadian territory and inland waters from the United States and Alaska? Has he thought of the peculiar obligations of Canada in that respect, vastly increased as they have been by the complacency with which British diplomats have sacrificed Canadian safety to American good will... and 'greed'¹? Has he considered the fact that the organisation and maintenance of two naval bases is rendered much more onerous to Canada, and far less effective, because the British government has abandoned the Panama Canal to the paternal tutelage of the United States — and that, in spite of the protest of at least one Canadian statesman?²

Then, what about large public works and undertakings *directly* connected with the safety of the Empire?

The construction of our magnificent canal system, of the Intercolonial Railway, on plans revised by the War Office, of the immense outlay upon the C. P. R. and its value to facilitate the swift transportation of British troops to Asia, — all these and other works were considered by SIR CHARLES TUPPER, among others, as a direct contribution to Imperial defence, more efficient than any amount of money thrown into the Imperial exchequer. At the first Colonial Conference, held in London, in 1887, MR. STANHOPE, then War Secretary, frankly acknowledged "that it is not possible to exaggerate the advantage from a military point of view which the Empire has gained by the construction of the Canadian Pacific Railway."³

The moment the principle of Imperial solidarity is accepted, every addition made by one of the partners to the security of the whole should be considered as a contribution to the common fund. In time of war especially, everything which tends to increase the facility and security of inter-imperial trade is a most appreciable

¹ On that point much useful information can be derived from a thoughtful reading of MR. HODGINS' book: "*British and American Diplomacy affecting Canada*". — Toronto (yes, Toronto!) 1900.

² HON. DAVID MILLS, then minister of Justice, in the *Empire Review* of November and December, 1901.

³ *Proceedings of the Colonial Conference*, 1887. (c. 5091), page 276. These and other evidences to that effect will be found in the above mentioned work: *Que devons-nous à l'Angleterre?*

factor of imperial safety and power. England is in constant need of food imports, in peace as well as in war. In that respect, Canada has done more than any of her sister-nations, in fact more than all combined, to increase the security of the Empire and ensure the life of England.

Before increasing the military burden of Canada and reducing that of the United Kingdom, ought not that aspect of the question be viewed in the light of the principles of equity laid down with so much force and lucidity by the clever editor of the *Round Table*?

War 'compensations'

A thought should also be given to the *compensations* which some of the partners may find in war operations. In the present conflict, Australia, New Zealand and South Africa have already conquered and actually occupy large tracts of land snatched from the enemy. The United Kingdom has appropriated to itself hundreds of millions worth of German goods and ships. Canada alone has received no compensation. In all likelihood, she will receive nothing. That such would be her fate in all future wars is almost certain, on account of her special position in the world.¹

Again, if the principle of solidarity is to prevail as regards the *burden* of Empire, should it not prevail also in the adjudication of Imperial *profits*? Ought not the conquests and seizures made by any of the partners be thrown into the common fund? Or, if obvious reasons make it imperative or more practical that each partner should keep what it has taken, then, ought not a compensation be given to those of the associates who were not in a position to help themselves first?

That this whole question of taxation, of profits and losses, — so vital to all Anglo-Saxon communities or individuals — constitutes one of the most difficult aspects of the problem has evidently struck the lucid mind of Mr. CURTIS. He seems to apprehend the complexity of the financial mechanism through which the contributions of each partner-nation would have to pass before it resolved itself into Imperial war funds. He therefore suggests to have the Imperial budget voted yearly, but always *for three years in advance*. This detail I mention for the mere purpose of marking its curious

¹ Were I not afraid of hurting the prudish sensitiveness of modern colonials, I might borrow a Shakespearian phrase and say, that, according to all appearances, Canada's *glorious* destiny in the association is to be the *cuckold* of Empire!

similarity with a suggestion made to the Canadian government, as early as 1862, by the DUKE OF NEWCASTLE, then Colonial Secretary. The suggestion was promptly rejected, with undisguised indignation, on the ground that it constituted "an interference with the privileges of the representatives of the people."¹

The coincidence is quite illustrative of the retrogressive character of the whole Imperialist movement. To count the number and measure the length of backward steps taken by Canada since the days of the South African War is a most interesting study for one who is fond of historical research. For those who believed in the emancipation of colonies and cherished the ideal proposed to all Canadians by MACDONALD, CARTIER, HOWE and the other founders of Confederation, it is poignant.

The race problem

No study of the present conditions of the British 'Commonwealth,' with a view to its political reconstruction, would be complete without full consideration of the formidable problem of races.

What is meant here is not the question at issue between French and English in Canada, or the relations of English and Dutch in South Africa. In the larger inquiry carried on by the *Round Table*, these will, no doubt, be dealt with, as well as the Irish question. But as they are mainly local questions, to be settled internally, Mr. CURTIS has, properly I think, passed them in silence.

The race problem of immediate imperial concern is that of the relations between white and coloured subjects of the king. Its complexity is largely increased by that diversity of local conditions which MR. CURTIS has rightly marked out as the first basic *fact* of the commonwealth. Its solution is rendered more difficult by this other fact, so conspicuous to all but Englishmen: of all Europeans, the Anglo-Saxon is the least capable of *understanding* people of different race and blood. To his native conceit, which tells so plainly his close relationship with the northern German, the modern Englishman has added a growing obtuseness, born of insularity and developed by self-complacence and pride in his mons-

¹ Report of Council, October 18, 1862. * The Canadian ministry was then headed by JOHN SANDFIELD MACDONALD, after the overthrow of the CARTIER-MACDONALD cabinet, on the Militia Bill. That incident is related at length, with copious quotations, in the above mentioned work: *Que devons-nous à l'Angleterre ?*

truous wealth, and, worse still, a morbid thirst of conquest and domination. That he occupies one quarter of the earth, that he 'rules the waves', that he governs or 'protects' more than one fourth of the human race, the Englishman is never tired of repeating right or left, *à propos* or *mal à propos*. Even a keen and cultured observer as Mr. CURTIS evidently is, broad-minded and high spirited, cannot altogether avoid the temptation of believing that the Anglo-Saxon has a born right to rule the world.

The clear result of those peculiarities is, that the Anglo-Saxon — in spite of his remarkable faculties for political government and the usual humaneness of his proceedings, when the passion of greed or of domination does not overcome his better instincts — is almost incapable of winning the confidence, still less the affection, of other races, whether he rules them or is simply associated with them. Now, where confidence and love are absent, good understanding is difficult.

The British Commonwealth includes today some 433,000,000 inhabitants, of whom 60,000,000 of European origin and 373,000,000 Asiatics, Africans, etc. Of the sixty million *white* Britishers, fifty nine live in the United Kingdom and the self-governing Dominions. Of the 373,000,000 *coloured*, five millions only live in the Dominions, mostly in South Africa; the rest inhabit India and the dependencies.

Consequently, the race problem, in the British Empire, presents itself under two distinct forms: the migration of coloured races from their birthlands to the *white* colonies; the internal government of India and the exotic dependencies.

Naturally, those two questions are treated by Mr. CURTIS quite separately, and in very few words — too few, because this is the most complex and baffling of all imperial problems. For years, it has occupied the most acute and brainiest minds of England; it has taxed the efforts of her most practical statesmen. The immensity of its scope they all attest; upon the urgency of a solution, in India especially, they all agree. But, so far, nothing but empirical and transient palliatives have been found. They have generally increased rather than cured the evil.

Indian immigration

The question of coloured immigration is a live and grave issue in Australasia principally and, to a lesser degree, in South Africa and British Columbia. To understand its main features, it is sufficient to study the situation raised in Australasia.

In the Oceanic Dominions, measures of exclusion, of an extreme character, have been enacted against all Asiatic immigration, but especially against the penetration of all races from India. It reached its zenith when access to port was interdicted to British merchantmen manned with lascars.

Let us hear the plea of justification put up by the Australians and New Zealanders. 'It is primarily an economic problem,' they say; 'white people cannot stand the competition of coloured labour. If we let the Hindus come, in the tropical regions especially, wages will soon be brought down to such a low rate that the white labourer will be starved to death. The country will be at the mercy of Asiatics. We will have to quit. For us it is a question of life or death.'

What is the reply? 'Economic necessity' is equally pleaded by the Indians; but they also invoke the fundamental principles of British institutions. 'India has an overflow of starving population. Why should we be deprived of an outlet in those other parts of the Empire where the climate and general conditions are suitable to us? India contains 315 million inhabitants, gathered upon a territory covering less than 1,800,000 square miles. By what right should 3 million Australians forbid us access to a territory of 3,000,000 square miles, out of which a large portion is inaccessible to white people?' Under what title in human law do the empty lands of the Empire belong to the white subjects of His Majesty, rather than to the brown, the yellow, the red or the black? British rule, we are told, is a régime of justice, liberty and equality. How is it that in lands peopled with Anglo-Saxons, so prone to boast of the superiority and benevolence of their institutions, we, British subjects, equal in right to the Australians and Canadians, should be treated as *undesirables*, and more despised than the negroes in the United States? The economic argument is a mere pretence. In contact with Europeans, Indians are not slow in claiming the same wages. The true motive, which Anglo-Saxons dare not confess, is their

unjustifiable prejudice against men, their equals, who happen to have the pigment differently coloured.'

To this plea, already strong, the war has brought additional arguments. 'The British have called us, 'say the Indians,' to fight in Europe for liberty and democracy, for the enfranchisement of peoples. England and Anglo-Saxons in general boast highly of their championship in the fight for liberty. The most ardent protectors of oppressed peoples they claim to be. After we have shed our blood to redeem the victims of German *oppression* and ensure, in the world, the triumph of British principles of 'liberty' and 'democracy', shall we continue to be treated as the scum of the earth, by Anglo-Saxons, under the British flag, in the very heart of this *our* Empire?'

India is right 'in the abstract'

That the argument of India is seemingly irrefutable "*in the abstract*", MR. CURTIS admits with his usual frankness. But *in the concrete*, he sides entirely with the Australians. Their argument of economic competition he accepts entirely. To those of his English compatriots who are disposed to sympathise with India, he recommends a slight effort of imagination. What would they think, feel and do, if they were suddenly threatened with an invasion of six Asiatics to every European man, woman and child living in London and the British Isles? ¹

In short, India would be right in principle, Australia in practice. This resembles somewhat the respective situations of Belgium and Germany, such as defined by Chancellor BETHMANN-HOLLWEG: "*Necessity knows no law.*" Teutons and Anglo-Saxons being much of the same turn of mind, it is not surprising that in the case of India, *facts*, not to say *might*, have so far been stronger than *right*.

To nervous readers who may be shocked at the comparison — though I can well remember the time when everything German was hailed in all Anglo-Saxondom as the highest expression of human progress — I recommend the antidote of a purely Anglo-Saxon expression of thought on this matter. It appeared in the *National Review* (London), in July 1911, under the signature of MR. JAMES EDMOND, one of the leading Australian publicists:

¹ This argument seems somewhat far-fetched. India would accept, seemingly, a measure of restriction such as applied in Canada to Japanese immigration

"To a very large section of Australians, German conquest 'would be quite a minor evil compared with a great influx of our 'allegedly peaceful and loyal coloured fellow-subjects from India 'or from anywhere else. In fact, if German conquest were the only 'visible safeguard against such an influx it might even be welcomed."

These are strong words. Never, to my knowledge, have they been disallowed, questioned or *explained* by any Australian. They were published in London at the very moment this thorny question was being discussed at the Imperial Conference¹. LORD CREWE, then Secretary for India, made a pathetic appeal to the imperial 'devotion' of the Dominion delegates. He represented that so long as no effort was made to conciliate India, it was useless to speak of a united empire. The appeal fell to the ground. All the colonial delegates, including the ultra-imperialist SIR JOSEPH WARD, premier of New Zealand, signified their firm determination to keep their countries *white*, and even to raise barriers still higher against immigration from India.

This significant episode goes a long way to show the shallowness of imperial *devotion* the moment it comes in conflict with the prejudices or peculiar interests of the Anglo-Saxon members of the Imperial community.²

Is the question 'settled'? Opinion of a 'savage'

Of the illuminating incidents of that struggle MR. CURTIS says nothing. "As it is," he declares, "the matter has been *settled* 'by the test of experience. . . In this respect the line which divides 'Imperial from Dominion functions is no longer a matter of speculation. It has now been clearly and firmly drawn by virtue of the 'principle, which DURHAM inaugurated, of leaving self-governing 'colonies to assume whatever powers they might *finally insist* 'upon taking." (p. 64).

Is the question finally "settled" ?

Under the régime of colonial self-government, *based on nationalism* pure and simple, every time a new measure of exclusion

¹ I think I am safe in saying that the article was published at that precise moment in order to strengthen the hands of the Australian ministers—if not at their request.

² In June 1914, one of the high officials in the India Office told me: "If Canada could see her way clear to help us in this matter, it would be worth all the dreadnoughts she could give us." Canada offered the dreadnoughts, but refused the real help.

was voted in Melbourne, Wellington or Victoria, the Imperial ministers had a ready answer to the claims of India. 'Australia, New Zealand, Canada, are in fact sovereign states,' they could say in perfect truth; 'in those matters the Dominions exercise an exclusive authority. They have an absolute right to decide what is best for them. We can no more impose our views, or yours, upon them than we could dictate to the United States or to Argentine what immigration laws they should adopt.'

But now, since the gospel of 'imperial solidarity' has displaced the old law of colonial autonomy, that answer would be out of place. If Indians, Australians and Canadians are jointly responsible for the freedom of Belgium and Serbia, jointly obliged to fight for the salvation of their common Empire in Europe and elsewhere, surely, they are jointly bound to prevent one class of Imperial citizens from treating as pestiferous beings another class of Imperial citizens and excluding them from a vast portion of their common Empire. The obligation appears to be still more pressing when it is remembered that, so far, the Imperial authorities have refused to India the power to exclude Canadians, Australians, New Zealanders, who go there to trade or, still worse, to fill public offices endowed with fat salaries paid out of the taxes levied on their Indian 'brethren'.

The governments of the white colonies, "*having no responsibility for the government of the Dependencies*", could not readily grasp the "difficulties created by their drastic handling of so delicate a "problem" (pp. 62-3). Well and good. But when they, in partnership with the United Kingdom, become *jointly and severally responsible for the good government of India and the large dependencies*, will they be at liberty to continue and ignore the *imperial aspect* of that "delicate problem"?

Could a *truly imperial* parliament, such as MR. CURTIS dreams of, let that question stay in the sphere of purely local matters?

Next time India comes and knocks at the door of the Supreme Council of Empire, claiming justice against the white colonies, *Imperial* ministers will not be at liberty to say what *British* ministers *can* and *must* say today: 'We are powerless. The measures of which you complain were enacted by a power equal to us in these matters.' The petitioners' reply would be but too easy: 'A supreme power has been created for the whole Empire, superior to all others, including the British government. Under that supreme power you exercise

an absolute control over all matters of imperial interest. As citizens of the Empire, we have shed our blood freely to vindicate in foreign parts those principles of liberty which you claim to be the essentials of your constitution, of *our* Commonwealth. It is upon *that* ground that we appeal to you to have this question settled in the sense of right, justice, liberty, as well as in the true interest of the Commonwealth.'

What answer can be given in denial it is hard to conceive, unless it be the ultra-English, and somewhat Prussian, maxim: '*What we have we hold!*'

How long will the people of India rest content with that *imperial* answer?

One day, I happened to talk of this with a Sikh, a former student and graduate of American, German and English universities. The previous evening, he had read, at McGill University, a 'paper' on the various schools of philosophy, ancient and modern, in India and Europe as well — which, to *his* shame, very few of *our* scholars were able to understand. Strange to say, in spite of his turban and the dark tinge of his skin, that 'savage' did not seem to realise his 'inferiority'. In fact, he had the audacity to think that, morally or intellectually, he was the equal of any Canadian. That his contact could 'degrade' the superfine 'culture' of our politicians or the high grade morality of our aldermen he positively declined to admit. "The question *must* be settled, sooner or later," said he in the calmest mood possible. "We are patient, we, of old civilisations: we count by centuries, as you by years. We are peaceful, also. But dismiss from your western minds the idea that three hundred million human beings will *always* accept to be treated as 'inferiors' by fifteen million other human beings, in no whit 'superior' to us from any standard of superiority that we know. If, to get justice, an appeal to justice is not sufficient, *we will get it otherwise.*" But what cannot be expressed is the tranquil assurance of that 'barbarian,' the serene and majestic expression of his eye, the unalterable sweetness of his voice, especially when he said: "*We will get it otherwise.*"

Really, I don't think the question is "settled" quite *finally*.

Partition of Imperial spoils

Complex as may be the problem of Asiatic immigration in the white colonies, it is almost child's play when compared with that other equation: the government of India and the great dependencies.

The British Empire is not a mere kitchen-garden. While preaching to the world the respect of the goods of others and the cult of liberty, honest JOHN BULL has quietly filled his pockets at the expense of all. In less than three centuries, he has acquired by discovery, conquest, purchase or theft not far from one quarter of all the known lands on the face of the earth — in pure disinterestedness, *by jingo!* merely to accomplish his 'educative' mission: "the white man's burden", as wrote the poet apologist of all crimes committed in the name of Imperial power.

Having conquered, he must organise, and above all, *keep*. "India, Egypt, and the African territories, by reason of their size as well as of their position, inevitably bring whatever government controls them into delicate relations with foreign states. The conduct of their internal government is so inseparably connected with the conduct of foreign affairs and defence, that the business of the Foreign, Indian and Colonial Offices could not be conducted at all unless the ministers in charge of them were united in one "cabinet" (p. 205), with the other Imperial ministers already mentioned. To the new Imperial association the management of those immense domains must therefore be attributed. Colonies and stations of strategical importance, such as the Western Indies, Gibraltar, Malta, Perim, Aden, Singapore, Hong-Kong, would also fall in. This pretty tract of land covers a total area of 3,000,000 square miles, with a total population of about 328,000,000. The rest of her Crown Colonies and protectorates, — a *paltry* matter of 2,000,000 square miles with 45,000,000 *protected* human beings — Great Britain would keep as her personal property.¹

¹ These figures are made out on the assumption that with Egypt the Soudanese hinterland only would go. MR. CURTIS is not quite clear on that point. In the above quoted passage, he speaks of "the African territories" in general; at page 199, he refers to "Egypt and Central Africa" alone. If the whole of the African protectorates went to the Commonwealth, these figures, of course, would be considerably altered. The objection advanced in the following paragraph would nevertheless subsist. England is just as liable to be at war for the possession of Cyprus, Ceylon or British Guiana as for the 'protection' of Nigeria.

This partition, at first sight, appears to be somewhat arbitrary. It certainly does not harmonise with the *ensemble* of the proposed system. All that may affect the foreign relations of the Commonwealth and start war must be brought under the control of *one imperial* government, responsible to *one* parliament elected by the people of *all* the associate-nations: such is the general principle laid down by MR. CURTIS. India and Egypt he places on the first rank of those imperial interests; and, rightly so. It is on account of India *principally*, that England made or broke most of her alliances, and waged most of her wars, in the last century. Egypt is a mere *consequence* of India. But to *all* her possessions the same reasoning would apply in varying degrees. India and Egypt may give rise to *more* causes of war; the other colonies may also bring international complications.

If, as suggested, all distinction is abolished between *local* defence and *imperial* defence, if *all* the self-governing nations are called upon to stand by each other in *every* war in which any of them may be engaged, then *all* causes of conflict must be foreseen. If Great Britain fights against Russia, China or Japan, on account of her Asiatic possessions *not* included in the partnership, her partners will have to go to her rescue. The same is true of Western Africa, of the borders of the Persian Gulf, of Ceylon and the Straits Settlements. In short, each and every one of the numberless possessions which insatiable England has incorporated within her Empire, in all parts of the globe, may be a cause of war to the Imperial association.

This is equally true of the recent conquests of South Africa, Australia and New Zealand. Canada alone stands in the unique and 'glorious' position of having no chance to get any compensation. Thanks to the new doctrine of 'imperial solidarity', coupled with the 'moral obligation' to fight for the Empire, and the newly discovered 'debt of gratitude to the motherland' that has plucked her so well in the past, Canada has a fair chance of having to fight in many wars to come, in order to help mother and sisters in keeping their spoils. The least she could demand, it seems, would be that *all* spoils should be put in common.

Government of India. — The “insoluble” problem

But *the* problem is the government of India.

One of the pontiffs of Imperialism was trying, one day, to convince me of the perfect feasibility of Imperial partnership. To every objection he had replied, now with a decisive answer, now with a plausible explanation. Finally, he was asked: “But what of India?” The answer was not slow in coming: “*This is so far the insoluble question.*”

In spite of his robust faith and magnificent optimism, MR. CURTIS admits that it is “one of the most serious difficulties which ‘have to be met in solving the problem which now confronts the ‘Commonwealth’” (p. 202). He touches but the surface of it. In that volume of 250 pages, so remarkably *full* and compact, hardly twelve are given to the government of the Dependencies, including the Empire of India, with its three hundred and twelve million souls, its semi-independent principalities and bureaucratic provinces, its numerous castes, its Moslems and Buddhists, its brahmins and outcasts — and also, its young Nationalist school, ardent, educated, all imbued with the maxims of English public law, always prepared to turn against foreign domination the teachings of the conqueror.

By what right does England rule those peoples in contradiction with the fundamental principles of her own constitution — against “the natural rights of man”, MR. CURTIS admits with admirable courage (p. 201)? Oh! simply “because these races are as yet ‘unable to govern themselves’” (p. 59). Always the ‘white man’s burden’, the ‘mission’ of the Anglo-Saxon. Poor JOHN BULL, *sacrificing* himself for the good of mankind!

Further on, a more practical reason is given. “As this war has “shown, the native armies of India, of Egypt, and of the Protectorates, as well as the [British] armies of occupation, are integral “factors in the whole scheme of Imperial defence. They must be “controlled by the Imperial Government. *But that one authority “should control the Indian and Egyptian armies, while another and “wholly separate authority controls their civil administration, is “unthinkable”* (p. 205). This sounds truer than the ‘moral obligation’ to ‘educate’ the Indians. But is it not the explicit avowal that where Nationalism is not Anglo-Saxon, or sufficiently anglicised, it ceases to be compatible with the exigencies of British Imperialism,

—in other words, that the essentials of British self-government cannot be safely granted to the non-British? It would be interesting to hear Mr. CURTIS on this point.

Let us, for the time being, confine ourselves to the other and more general aspect of the problem: the supposed incapacity of coloured races to rule themselves. Admitting this to be true of most of the peoples in Asia, Africa or Oceania, kept willy-nilly under British rule, is it equally true of India, of British India especially, of those United Provinces where the rulers of Empire have pursued, for over a century, their work of 'education' upon a remarkably intelligent people?

To hear the Indians themselves on that point would, it seems, be both proper and useful.¹ Why the author of this valuable work, otherwise so comprehensive and *complete*, has thought fit to overlook that vital point, is, to my mind, incomprehensible. The growing agitation for self-government in India he does not even mention.

Is it that he, a missionary of Empire, thinks inopportune to *amaze* and frighten the colonial catechumens by unveiling at once the awful complexity of the problem as well as the immensity of the task to which the 'sister-nations' are called? Or is it simply the unrootable self-confidence of the Anglo-Saxon, the inborn conviction that with 'inferior' races — and that includes about all that is not English — the Englishman has but to command, and the 'savage' to obey? In a mixture of those two feelings the explanation probably lies; — and also in the set conviction that the new basis of Empire must first be laid down by the self-governing nations of the Commonwealth, leaving to their combined efforts the solution of the other problems. Nevertheless, it is highly desirable that MR. CURTIS should, in a second edition of his work, add an 'appendix' to this chapter, as he did for Imperial finance. Otherwise, this valuable work, so illuminating, so honest and sincere in all other respects, would leave an impression of incompleteness, and worse still, of shiftiness and insincerity, touching the most formidable obstacle to the consummation of that Imperial union, so ardently desired by the writer².

¹ This is what the present writer proposes to do in a subsequent study.

² The words "shiftiness and insincerity" are used here merely to express the *mental* impression that may be left on the mind of the reader by what appears to be a weak point in the thesis. As to the courage and sincerity of the author, there cannot be the slightest doubt.

For the time being, MR. CURTIS contents himself with saying that “responsible leaders of the national party in India . . . would “say that whatever the rate of the progress to be made in that direction,”—[capacity for self-government)—“*the final authority in* “Indian affairs must remain, *for the present*, where it *now rests*” (pp. 202-3.)

The assent of the Indian leaders is not, I think, quite as positive and unanimous as that; according to MR. CURTIS himself, it is conditional upon transient facts. Besides, that “*final authority*”, which they accept “for the present”, where does it “*now rest*”? Primarily, with the British Vice-Roy, with the British governors and lieutenant-governors, with the British residents and high functionaries of state, assisted, here and there, by various councils and assemblies, where a British or official majority over-rules a native minority. But, above all, the “*final authority*” rests with the *British* Secretary of State for India, responsible to the *British* parliament. That supreme authority, under the scheme propounded by MR. CURTIS, would be transferred to the *Imperial* government and parliament, in which all the *white* Dominions would be represented. To the present and growing difficulties, largely due to a lack of sympathetic comprehension on the part of the British, would be added the suspicions and hatred that have marked, so far, the distant relations of Australians and New Zealanders with Indians. On the other hand, it seems impossible to prevent the *white* Dominions from keeping the Indians out of their respective territories. Is it likely that by bringing Indians and Australasians closer together, and giving the latter *imperial* authority over the former, the relations will become more cordial?

That the “final authority” over India should “rest” with a government partly composed of Australasians and Canadians none of the leaders of the national party in India would, I think, admit.

In abstract right, India is as much entitled to self-government, and to Imperial partnership as well, as any other British community. This MR. CURTIS frankly admits. “The peoples of India and “Egypt, *no less than those of the British Isles and Dominions*, must “be gradually *schooled* to the management of their national affairs” (p. 206). In joining hands with Britain to rule the Commonwealth, the ‘sister-nations’ must also join in her missionary task and continue with her the ‘education’ of those “backward races.”

But, with the adjunction of Australians and other *white* colonials to the teaching staff, there is much risk that *some* of the teachers, at least, will lack tact, and the pupils lose patience. A repetition of the Ontario Bilingual School mess it will likely be, inflated to the proportion of a continent peopled with 315,000,000 human beings, not Anglo-Saxons, and seemingly bent on resisting all efforts to anglicise or saxonise them.

The matter deserves consideration.

An Imperial Convention

In the concluding chapter of this remarkable book, MR. CURTIS once more demonstrates the abject state of servitude to which the inhabitants of the self-governing colonies will be reduced, after the war — and *because of the war*, — if they do not decide to demand and obtain full control of their foreign affairs, either as independent republics, or in partnership with the free citizens of the United Kingdom.

“If Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and South Africa are the communities to which their final allegiance is due, then their peoples must severally determine the issues of peace and war for ‘themselves’ (p. 244);— and that can be accomplished ‘by a stroke of the pen, by a simple notification to all foreign capitals ‘as well as to London’ (p. 242)— ‘But if the state for which they desire to live and to die is that greater Commonwealth for which so many are now devoting their lives, then also must they join with ‘each other to control its foreign affairs’ (p. 244).

If such is the decision, an “Imperial Convention” must be called to do what was done by the Quebec Conference and other congresses of the same nature, in and through which the present constitutions of the various Dominions were elaborated. In that Convention the terms of partnership would be determined. Legal sanction would then be given to it by the present British parliament, which would thereafter cease to exist as an *Imperial* legislature: this would be its swan’s song. Naturally, none of the partner-nations would enter the *ring* until the treaty of alliance had been approved and sanctioned by its electorate (p. 223).

It is not yet done; but it certainly is interesting.

Let us now endeavour to mark out the consonant and dissonant chords between the Imperialist thesis, as presented by MR. CURTIS, and the Nationalist doctrine as I understand it.

III

Points of agreement and disagreement

The constitutional principles laid down in MR. CURTIS'S book are exactly those which the Nationalists in Canada have never ceased to invoke against the participation of Canada in Britain's wars. His definition of the national status of Canada and the other self-governing Dominions coincides absolutely with our own: Canada is a sovereign state, a nation independent *by right*, though not *in fact*.

With us, he holds that, in Canada as well as in England, the king cannot *order* without the assent of his ministers, and that those ministers cannot rule without the support of a parliamentary majority elected by the people. Consequently, the King of Great Britain and Ireland cannot demand or expect any military help from Canada without the free leave of the elected representatives of the Canadian people.

With us, he holds that each British country in possession of self-government has the right to proclaim its absolute independence and to remain neutral in any war in which Britain may be engaged.

With us, he holds that the United Kingdom having, with the free and tacit consent of the self-governing colonies, heretofore kept and exercised an exclusive authority upon all matters of international concern, the British nation alone is *obliged* to support the burden of war.

With us, he holds that the participation of the Dominions in the present war marks a radical revolution in the order set by the various colonial charters and the established traditions of British government; that the present condition of the Dominions is abject and "intolerable"¹; that the old order being destroyed forever, a new constitutional order must of necessity take its place; that there are and can be but two "real alternatives": the full independence of the Dominions, or their full partnership with the United Kingdom.

¹ This is SIR ROBERT BORDEN'S qualification.

On all those points of law or fact, — the choice of the alternative being reserved — we are in complete accord, not only with the British Imperialists, but also with every authority in England, and with the whole Canadian tradition, up to the days of the South African war.

On the principles of constitutional government, we are in agreement *de facto* with all English jurists, from MAY to POLLOCK.

On the national status of the Dominions, we are in complete accord, *de facto* and *de jure*, with the same jurists, with all British statesmen, from DURHAM and ELGIN down to CHAMBERLAIN, CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN, BALFOUR, ASQUITH and BONAR LAW, with all the Canadian statesmen who made and worked out the constitution of Canada: MACDONALD, CARTIER, BLAKE, LAURIER, BORDEN.¹

¹ Here are a few quotations taken at random:

MAY:—"An ancient monarchy has become the parent of *democratic republics* 'in all parts of the globe. . . . her colonial dependencies have grown into *affiliated states*. . . . Parliament has recently pronounced it to be just that the colonies 'which enjoy self government, should undertake the responsibility and cost of 'their own military defence." — As regards Canada, that was done in 1865. — "Whenever it may be effected, the last material bond of connection with the colonies will have been severed; and colonial states, acknowledging the *honorary* 'sovereignty of England, and fully armed for self-defence, *as well against herself* 'as others, will have grown out of the dependencies of the British Empire." — (*Constitutional history of England*, edition of 1912, vol. II, pp. 373-4-5).

HOLLAND (May's commentator):—"After 1887, 'the colonies were no longer 'regarded as dependencies belonging to England, but as Dominions owning, 'in common with England, allegiance to the Queen" — (Id., vol. III, p. 310.)

POLLOCK:—"The self-governing colonies are, in fact, *separate kingdoms*, 'having the same king as the parent group, but *choosing* to abrogate that part of 'their full autonomy which relates to foreign affairs. . . . *The sovereignty is a figment*. 'The states of the Empire stand on an equal footing" — (Quoted by JOHN S. EWART, in *Kingdom Paper* No. 1, p. 13).

CHAMBERLAIN:—"The throne is the only constitutionnal connecting link 'between the colonies and ourselves. In all else, these great self-governing communities are *as independent as we are*." — (Speech at Birmingham, 21 June 1897).

CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN:—"The cost of naval defence and the responsibility 'for the conduct of foreign affairs hang together". (Speech at the *Colonial Conference*, 1897 — [cd. 3523], p. 5).

BALFOUR:—"I believe, from a legal point of view, the British Parliament is 'supreme over the Parliament of Canada or Australia, or the Cape or South Africa. 'But, *in fact, they are independent parliaments, absolutely independent*." — [*Times*, February 1st, 1911—quoted by J. S. EWART, *Kingdom Paper* no. 6, p. 161].

BONAR LAW:—"There great Dominions are, in fact, *independent states*." — [see first page].

MACDONALD:—"We stand, with regard to the people of Canada, *precisely* 'in the same position as the House of Commons of England stands with regard to 'the people of England". — [*Confederation Debates*, p. 1007].

In introducing the "Quebec Resolutions" in the Legislature, MACDONALD qualified them as an offer of "permanent *alliance*" to England, but leaving Canada free to conclude "alliances" with other nations as well. (Id. p. 43). As every one knows, he wanted Canada to assume the rank and title of a 'Kingdom'.

In 1862, d'ARCY MCGEE, presenting himself for reelection as a 'Minister of

Constitution, a fact; Nationality, a right

As between the constitutional axioms applicable to all British countries, and the right of the Dominions to decide their own fate, we make however a clear distinction. The former we accept as a *fact* to be reckoned with, the latter as an inalienable right, the most precious birthright of Canadians.

The British system of government, in Canada, is a consequence of British conquest and occupancy, for which we, surely, are not responsible. It has its good and bad features. Any how, it is here to stay; and so long as it stands, it is the duty of all Canadians, we claim, to make it work, according to its true spirit, so as to ensure and enlarge the *national* liberty of Canada, not to curtail it.

The new political order, or, rather, *disorder* created by the participation of Canada in the war, is neither a monarchy nor a republic, an autocracy nor a democracy, an alliance nor a federation. It is anarchy, pure and simple. As regards the Dominions it contains and develops the worst elements of all systems, with none or few of their redeeming features. There is no set authority, no true liberty, no definite responsibility.

As it works now, the least taxpayer in the United Kingdom may and will eventually approve or condemn, by his vote, the foreign policy of his government, the participation of England in the war, the conduct of war operations on land or sea, the terms of the coming peace. The millions of British subjects and taxpayers in the Dominions are absolutely deprived of that power. The vote of one single cab-driver in London counts more, in those vital matters affecting the whole British Empire, than the skill, the will and the combined votes of all the inhabitants of Canada, Australia, New Zealand and South Africa.

Canadians have not even the consolation of thinking that the supreme political authority is in the hands of a king imbued with the sense of his responsibilities and the salutary perils of his high station, or that the *final* military command is in the hands of skilful and well trained military men.

the Crown', claimed for Canada the right to declare her neutrality to the world
"Canada is a nation" is SIR WILFRID LAURIER's oft-repeated statement.

Numerous other authorities can be found in MR. EWART'S valuable *Kingdom Papers*.

No, in those matters of supreme interest, which govern the whole of our national life, present and future, we, and all Canadians, are at the entire mercy of a pack of transient English politicians, who are themselves in the hands of an electoral mob in the British Isles. The fifteen millions of Canadians, Australians, New Zealanders, South Africans, have not even the ghost of a chance to reach those politicians, or to counteract or modify the influence of that electorate. It is the oppression of one democracy over four democracies: Pelion on Ossa.

That false régime, with all its germs of revolution and anarchy, cannot last. "*There must be a change.*" In this again we are at one with MR. BONAR LAW, MR. ASQUITH, MR. LLOYD GEORGE, LORD MILNER, SIR ROBERT BORDEN, MR. ANDREW FISHER, Premier HUGHES.

To be rational and enduring, the "change" must be in conformity with the fundamental traditions and deep instincts of the various British communities. National independence, or imperial partnership on the lines suggested by MR. CURTIS: those are the only "real alternatives" with any element of feasibility and endurance. And the choice must be made *now*¹. All palliatives or half-measures will simply retard the inevitable issue and make it a growing menace to the peace of all parties concerned.

If the Dominions proclaim their independence after a series of protracted contentions with the United Kingdom, they will quit the 'motherland' in a state of mind similar to that of the American colonies on the eve of separation. For a full century, that feeling of animosity remained alive and frequently threatened the peace of America. Even to-day, in spite of the influence of English finance in New York, it is far from being extinguished.

Likewise, if Imperial partnership is preceded by long and angry disputes; or, worse, if the present game of mutual deceit is kept going, the agreement will be more difficult to conclude, its duration more precarious. While it lasts, its working will be hampered by mutual jealousy and suspicion.

¹ This does not mean that the change must be *effected* immediately; but simply that the preparatory work, educative and otherwise, must be started *now* with the one goal or the other in view.

Independence is our choice

As between the two “real alternatives” — Independence or Imperial partnership — what will be the choice of Canada? It is yet difficult to say. Powerful factors are working both ways. As usual, the more apparent may not be the more effective, nor those that will carry at the end.¹

As to us, Nationalists, our choice has been made many years ago.

We certainly would have preferred, I confess, not to see the issue so brusquely raised. The fault is not ours. For the events that have made it imperative we surely are not responsible. We did not provoke the war; we did not join Liberals and Conservatives to take the pledge of hypocrisy grotesquely called the “party truce”; with professed Imperialists and renegade ‘Nationaslists’ we have not conspired to turn the participation of Canada in the war into the complete and fatal revolution from which Canada must now emerge.

The choice being put to us, we vote for Independence. It is, to our mind, “the simplest” solution of the national problem, the most consonant with British and Canadian traditions, the “necessary goal” of self-government. With SIR JOHN MACDONALD and BISHOP CHARLES LAROCQUE, we consider that the present constitution was meant to prepare Canada “to take rank with the nations

¹ For the self-governing Dominions generally, there are, there can be, but two “real alternatives”: independence or partnership. But as regards Canada alone, there remains *always* a third possible solution, suggested by its peculiar geographical situation, and that is, union with the United States of America. That nobody wants, apparently. Nevertheless, active agencies are at work that may bring it sooner than any of the two other alternatives. There are, first, the blind assimilators, bent on *anglicising* all non-British elements — a sure way of making them all Americans. That consequence of anglicisation was clearly perceived by LORD ELGIN, more than sixty years ago. Then we have, principally in French Canada, I am sorry to say, the short-sighted and time-serving politicians, who imagine that all Canadians are satisfied to remain indefinitely in the present state of abjection, which appears to them as the supreme ideal for a nation. Finally, we have, exclusively in Quebec, I am still more sorry to say, a new school of clerics — small in number, thank Heaven! — who are bent on stifling in the minds of French Canadians all aspirations towards national freedom, all sense of national responsibilities.

Those three classes of men are all equally anti-national and un-British as well, in spite of their professions of loyalty. National disintegration is the sure and only possible result of their activities or passivity. Should they persist and succeed in their nefarious work, they would soon turn, in favour of continental union, a large portion of the element that has, in the past, constantly and successfully opposed the open tory propaganda for annexation, in the forties, and the insidious liberal policy of ‘unrestricted reciprocity’, fifty years later.

of the earth.” Complete independence is, for every nation, the only inspiring ideal, the only *real* form of national life. This we still believe, as BLAKE and LAURIER did in the past, as MERCIER and LEMIEUX in days gone by.

The kind and degree of liberty which SIR JOHN MACDONALD desired for Canada, in 1865 — absolute independence under the nominal sovereignty of the British King — would be perhaps acceptable.¹ But to all appearance, England’s insatiable greed has rendered that solution impracticable. Since 1865, as already noted, the British Empire has doubled in size. Britain has more and greater causes of conflict than she had then. On the other hand, the rapid growth of socialism in the British Isles — not to speak of the eternal Irish question — has rendered the internal situation of the United Kingdom far more precarious. Apart from the stupendous war expenditure, ‘social legislation’ over-loads the British Exchequer. To any re-arrangement that would not give them the full benefit of the manhood and material resources of the Dominions, in *all* wars, the British would most likely prefer secession pure and simple.

Snares and perils Independence would have, no doubt; but the perils would be fewer and the snares less treacherous than under any other condition.

The perils of Canada, as of all nations, are of three kinds: economic rivalries, internecine strifes, external aggressions. None of these could be greater or more numerous if Canada were a free nation. On the-contrary, complete independence would tend to reduce them all, both in size and number.

Economic advantages — The example of Argentina

From a purely material point of view the advantages of Independence are obvious. Had Canada proclaimed her independence at the time of Confederation, her material condition would be far better now than it is. She would have more population and more wealth, she would produce more and trade more. To say that she would rival the United States would be rather bold; but she would be much closer to her neighbour in the race. Instead of confining her trade relations to Great Britain and the United States,

¹ It is the solution suggested by MR. J. S. EWART, in his *Kingdom of Canada* and several of his *Kingdom Papers*.

of borrowing all her much needed capital in London and New York, she would entertain profitable trade and financial relations in all the markets of the world. From British economic tutelage she would be free; by the rivalry of all trading nations she could profit.

She would be represented abroad by her own consuls and trade agents. Her needs and resources would be known, not only as a mere fragment of the immense preserve of Great Britain, but as *her own*.

The example of Argentina is a fruitful object lesson to Canada. Situated in a similar latitude, the southern republic has no greater natural advantages than the northern confederacy. Many causes, internal and external, long retarded her progress. When she decided, her house being set to order, to enter the race of the world, she was much behind Canada. To-day she is far ahead of us in all that makes an intelligent, progressive and attractive country. What is the cause of that marvellous progress? The help of British capital? She received much less than Canada. The protection of the British fleet? Evidently, no. The 'superiority' of the Spaniards and half-breeds over the Anglo-Saxons? This, our Empire builders will hardly admit. What then? There remains but one explanation. The citizens of Argentina, old and new, native or imported, think of only *one* country as their own, and that is, the land they live in, the land of their birth or adoption. Upon that *one* country are centred *all* their energies, *all* their hopes, *all* their pride, *all* their mental and moral power of construction. Their patriotism is not distracted by thoughts of the "old country", or dreams of Imperial cooperation, or thirst for Imperial domination. The substance of their people they do not squander in bloody fights, upon other continents, in order to adjust international morality as between one set of law breakers and another set of blood suckers. To 'save the liberties' of the world by making the Mikado the arbiter of Asia and the Tsar of all Russias the over-lord of Europe in place of the German Kaiser, they do not take it to be their special 'moral duty'.

Needless to say, after the war, Argentina will outrun Canada by leaps and bounds. The contrast will stand as an object lesson to all peoples who sacrifice real *national* duty to the call of 'loyalty' to foreign lands or to the allurements of Imperial 'glory'.

Independence and internal difficulties

What about our racial quarrels?

Far from being embittered by a rupture of the colonial or imperial bond, they would perforce take a smoother course.

For peoples as for individuals, the exercise of larger responsibilities is a marvellous education: it has a sobering effect. Left to themselves, obliged to provide alone for their own protection, Canadians of both races, of all races, would be forced to come to an understanding upon many a point on which they now seem to be irremediably divided. Ceasing to count on the doubtful 'protection' of Great Britain, they would have to count on themselves, that is, on each other.

The moment Anglo-Canadians were freed from the enervating spell of pan-anglo-saxonism, they would pursue with less bitterness their foolish attempts to anglicise, i. e., to *americanise* the French-Canadians. Brought in closer relation with foreign nations, they would soon find out that there are in the world other human beings than Anglo-Saxons, other nations than Great Britain and the United States, other world's languages than the English, other civilisations than Anglo-Yankee mercantilism. They would not be slow in discovering that the preservation and simultaneous growth of two national languages and two different types of mental culture, far from being an *obstacle* to the progress of Canada, *constitute its most powerful factor and our greatest national asset*. The moment the English-speaking majority have found that much, they will make this other discovery: that the French-Canadians are much more *Canadian* than *French*, and therefore, once left alone in the development of their *ethnical* propensities, always prepared to co-operate with the English majority, provided the latter prove also that they are more *Canadian* than *English* or *Imperial*. Then, the racial quarrel will be at an end or very near it.

So long as the majority of Canadians have two countries, one here and one in Europe, national unity will remain a myth and a constant source of internecine quarrels.

Less danger of external aggressions

In the sphere of external relations, in all the issues of peace and war, Canada, once freed from the intricacies of Imperial politics, would be much safer than she is now. Menaces to her peace, if any, would be much fewer and far less redoubtable.

Before the present revolution, when the self-governing colonies had practically brought the British to acknowledge their right to remain neutral in all *imperial* wars, there might have been a doubt. Causes of danger and elements of security were pretty evenly balanced. For Canada, however, on account of her peculiar situation on the continent of America, risks of war were always greater than for any other colony, and the 'protection' of Great Britain much more problematical.

But now that the principle of 'imperial solidarity' has taken place of the old doctrine and practice of 'colonial neutrality', there is no doubt possible.

The sole possession of India, with its growing ferments of independence, is in itself an overflowing source of possible wars.

In the fifty years elapsed since our war agreement of 1865, England has doubled her monstrous colonial empire.

On the other hand, the trade and industrial development of other countries — United States, Germany, Japan, Russia — and the colonial expansion of France and Italy have brought rivals to Britain in many lands and upon numerous markets long considered by Englishmen as their own, or nobody's.

The dire result of that situation is, that England, and her 'sister-nations' as well, have to-day many more causes of war than half a century ago.

Some good people take comfort in the thought that the 'crushing defeat of Germany' will be followed by eternal peace, and that for centuries to come the Gaul, the Saxon, the Russ and the Lombard — not to speak of the Jap or the Serb — will play together in celestial amity, as cherubs in some Italian painting of the fifteenth century, and keep the world in joy, happiness and peace.

A fool's paradise is the abode of those gullible creatures.

After this, other wars will come; and the more "crushing" the defeat, on one side or the other, the quicker the revenge, the bloodier the retaliation.

In those future wars, the alignment of armies is sure to be different from the present one. “Within a year from the breaking of Germany’s power”, wrote an English publicist in the first days of the war, “our Imperialists will be calling out for a strong Germany “to balance a threatening Russia.”¹

One thing is certain. So long as England pretends to ‘rule the waves’, to govern or ‘protect’ one quarter of mankind and ‘police’ the rest, and sticks to her mania of ‘painting the map in red’, she will run more risks of war than any other nation. She may wage fewer *petty* wars. She will certainly be engaged in more wars of a gigantic character.

By sticking to the British Empire, Canada and the other Dominions therefore contribute to increase the dangers of war to themselves and to the world at large.

Of all British communities, Canada is most exposed to attacks from Britain’s enemies. As an independent country, she would be the least threatened. SIR WILFRID LAURIER said once that the only real menace to Canada is on the continent of America, meaning thereby a possible aggression from the United States. Against that improbable — though not impossible — menace, the ‘protection’ of Great Britain, the ‘protection’ of the whole Empire, is futile. In fact, England has *always* refused to run any risk of war with the United States for Canada’s sake. On the other hand, Canada was twice brought to war against the United States, and her territory twice invaded, on account of England.²

By remaining British, Canada is exposed to all the consequences of Britain’s possible quarrels with the United States, besides her own difficulties. Independent, she runs her risks only.

Is it not a remarkable fact that so long as our wrangles with the Americans were taken in hand by English diplomats, ‘backed’ by the ‘power and prestige’ of a British fleet, the settlement was *always* to our detriment? Count them: from the first abandonment of a good slice of Canada’s territory, in 1783, down to LORD ALVERSTONE’S award, more than a century later.³ Since we deal alone

¹ H. M. BRAILSFORD: “*The Empire of the East*”.—*Contemporary Review*, September, 1914.

² This does not mean by England’s fault. It simply means that Canada was at war because of her British connexion.

³ Here again the reader is referred to MR. HODGINS’ book: *British and American diplomacy affecting Canada*.

and directly with the “greedy Yankee” — as ultra-loyal Canadians used to say, — we have no trouble in getting justice and fair play.

To all other nations, the same reasoning would apply. To-day, all of Britain’s foes are Canada’s enemies. An independent Canada would have to deal only with her own foes. Where are they?

Let us compare Canada’s situation with that of the South American republics. To the great — and greedy — nations of Europe, several of those countries offer *attractions* certainly equal to those of Canada, Nevertheless, during the whole century, or close to it, which elapsed since they declared their independence, *not one was ever attacked by an extra-American power.*

It is thus rigorously true to say that in the order of external relations, an independent Canada would be much safer than at present, or under the suggested condition of Imperial partnership.

Imperial partnership, second best choice

If, however, the majority of Canadians are not prepared to assume their full national responsibilities, will they refuse to exchange servitude for partnership? The solution suggested by MR. CURTIS would be decidedly preferable to the present state of anarchy. In all respects, viewed from all points, it would certainly be less disastrous to Canada than the condition to which she has been reduced, thanks to the ‘sacred union’ of our two ‘great’ parties.¹

The ‘sinister designs’ of Imperialists have lately been denounced in high philippics by MR. RODOLPHE LEMIEUX.² Naturally, the traditions of the liberal party, ‘jealous keeper of Canada’s autonomy’, have been praised to the skies, as usual... in Quebec.

“We do not want a war contribution of forty millions voted in London”, cried out the ex-minister, after a direct reference to MR. CURTIS’ book and suggested plan of reconstruction. That he, with his leader and the whole of his party, voted hundreds of millions to wage a war declared in London without Canada’s knowledge and conducted from London without any consultation with Can-

¹ On that point, the present writer has expressed himself quite as plainly as on the superior advantages of independence in his work entitled: *Hier, Aujourd’hui, Demain*—Montréal, 1916.

² Late minister in the LAURIER cabinet. The speech was delivered in Montreal, September 27, 1916.

adian authorities, MR. LEMIEUX forgot to mention. That, as regards Canada, the war will be settled in London, without Canada's knowledge or co-operation, he also neglected to say.

MR. LEMIEUX's plea for 'autonomy' is of the very same order as SIR WILFRID LAURIER's eloquent denunciation of 'militarism'.¹ After having done, in the past seven years, all he could to bring Canada to the acute point of 'militarism' under which she groans to-day, SIR WILFRID pledges himself to fight 'militarism' tooth and nail... when the war is over! Very much like the burglar who carefully locked the door of the stable after his own accomplice had gone away with the horse.

In all that relates to war contributions and 'autonomy,' the question is not, *where* Canada's contributions are voted, but to *what purpose* they are voted, and by *whom* they are both voted and administered. All the millions required by England SIR WILFRID and his party have 'freely' voted, in unison with SIR ROBERT BORDEN and his followers. Liberals and Conservatives, 'autonomists' and Imperialists, have joined hands to "mortgage the blood "of the Canadian nation up to five hundred thousand human lives",² for the benefit of that Empire of which MR. LEMIEUX said once, not in Montreal: "It is worth living for, it is worth dying for." The millions once voted in *Ottawa*, the "food for cannon" (liberal style of 1896) delivered in England, MR. LEMIEUX's 'friends,' ASQUITH and LLOYD GEORGE, in partnership with SIR ROBERT BORDEN's 'friends,' BALFOUR and BONAR LAW, can do whatever they please with our men and money, even let our troops be wantonly slaughtered through the neglect or stupidity of British officers. This MR. LEMIEUX and his fellow 'autonomists' find quite proper and consonant with their notion of national 'liberty'.

The Nationalist view is different. If really we must 'live' in the Empire, and 'die' for the Empire, it would be in better accord with the principles of 'autonomy' to have our money voted "in London", in a truly *Imperial* parliament where accounts can be asked, than let our grit and tory eunuchs at Ottawa deliver both our blood and our money in London, to a foreign government accountable to the sole electors of London or Glasgow, of Yorkshire or Midlothian. Granting that we have the 'moral duty' of bleeding to

¹ At the same meeting, in Montreal.

² Words of MR. P. E. LAMARCHE, at Nicolet, October 1, 1916.

death in order to ensure the triumph of democracy —and political murder— in Serbia, and to help our Little Father the Tsar in establishing ‘liberty’ and ‘superior civilisation’, after the Cossacks’ fashion, from Lemberg to Vladivostock, from Arkangel to Constantinople, we ought at least to be given the advantage of ‘heckling’, through our elected representatives, the minister of Foreign affairs who will represent us at the peace congress. Our politicians fervidly enjoin their fellow citizens to go and fight in Europe in the ‘sacred cause’ for which *they* stay at home and ‘talk’. But, the war once over, both fighters and *slackers* will be equally deprived of the only real British means — the vote — of approving or blaming the men responsible for the conduct of the war and its conclusion.

When peace comes, *all* the peoples of Europe, without one single exception, may square accounts with their leaders, with the men responsible for *their* share in the war or in the conclusion of peace. Alone of all peoples at war, the Canadians and other ‘free citizens’ of the ‘free countries’ of the British Empire will be denied that privilege. Should they attempt, through *their* representatives in *their* parliaments, to question *their* rulers, SIR WILFRID LAURIER or SIR ROBERT BORDEN, MR. LEMIEUX or MR. DOHERTY, would not be slow in replying that they had nothing to do with the conduct of war or the conclusion of peace, that, so far as Canada is concerned, those supreme issues of life and death are *entirely* in the hands of British ministers in London, and that those ministers are responsible to the electorate of the British Isles *only*.

Is that ‘autonomy’? Is it ‘liberty’?

In British communities, there is no ‘autonomy’, there is no ‘liberty’, unless there is *responsibility* and *control*. No war contribution, in men or money, is ‘free’, unless the granting of that contribution is preceded, accompanied and followed by the privilege of representation and the consequent power of control over the employment of those men and the use of that money.

‘Quality Niggers’ of the Empire

The kind of liberty which MR. LEMIEUX extols and wishes to ‘preserve’ to his fellow citizens is voluntary servitude, more abject, *because voluntary*, than slavery imposed by brute force. The *quality niggers* of Virginia had that conception of ‘freedom’. Attached to their masters by abundant food and good clothing,

those *privileged* slaves fought *voluntarily* in the ranks of the Confederates. Lincoln's proclamation of liberty plunged them into consternation. By breaking their bonds, it forced them to earn a living and take all their responsibilities as human beings. To this they were not used: *responsibility* they dreaded more than they loved freedom.

Voluntary servitude we despise and we hate.

Full national independence, neutrality and peace we would prefer to all other conditions. But if we must don the khaki and help England in doing police work all the world over, let it be as responsible partners, and not as 'loyal and patriotic' flunkies, even if it should cost us more to *co-operate* than to *serve* 'freely'. Likewise, regular military service would be much preferable to the present system of 'free' enlistment kept up by blackmail and intimidation, and the degrading 'oratory' of *slacker* politicians, who have betrayed all their past pledges, under the broad pretence of 'saving the liberties of the world'... by proxy.

Does it mean that we, Nationalists, are prepared to accept holus-bolus and in all its details the plan of reform suggested by MR. CURTIS and the *Round Table*? Far from it.

Independence is *our* solution. When the hour of decision comes, we will advocate this "the simplest" solution of the 'problem of Empire' — and should we fall short of arguments, there would be no trouble in replenishing our quiver with some of the shafts so ably used in the past by SIR WILFRID LAURIER and MR. LEMIEUX.

But if the majority of Canadians decide to shirk their national responsibilities, and shrink from the full exercise of national freedom, then we will fall back on the alternative, and claim real and complete participation in the government of the Empire, as a counterpoise to the burdens of which Canada now bears her full charge.

Conditions of partnership

Naturally, the conditions of partnership will have to be discussed. The above indicated objections to the all-speculative apportionment of the Imperial budget will have to be considered and thrashed out.

Above all, we would claim the application of the principle of partnership to all British communities fit for it — to India, for example.

Convinced as we are that partnership is and must be the transient step to independence, we consider that the association should include the largest possible number of disjunctive forces. The presence of Indians in the supreme councils of the Empire would be a tremendous factor of dissociation. Pending the desirable end, their contact and example would tend to renovate in our weak-kneed politicians the sense of national dignity and pride.

For the comfort of 'loyalists', whether they profess 'loyalty' from the heart or from the lips, I have no objection to add this: the dissolution of that monstrous trust called the British Empire I sincerely desire, because it *now* appears to be incompatible with the peace and happiness of the world, and the free development of the several nations of which it is composed¹. But let a new British partnership realise the nobler hopes of its sincere advocates, and become a real instrument of peace, progress and good order, instead of being the most powerful agency of conquest, moral domination and degrading mercantilism; — let it demonstrate by experience that it can conciliate the necessities of imperial union with the just aspirations of the nationalism proper to each partner-nation: — and I, for one, am prepared, in my humble sphere and with sincere effort, to help in making it work and last.

As to the pusillanimous *shirkers*, mostly French Canadians, who would forever keep Canada in the quagmire rather than run the risk of partnership, let them remember this: *if Imperial partnership is untrue to its promises, it will soon break asunder*. The immense majority of the future partners, have not, like us, a backbone bent and softened by three centuries of *colonialism*. Australians, New Zealanders, South Africans, even Anglo-Canadians, have not been taught to passively obey the orders of their English masters and lend themselves to all their wishes or calculations. In spite of their present exalted servility, of their moral abasement, the result of gold worship and — this in common with the French — of petty party politics, they still preserve some of the old Anglo-Saxon spirit of independence. Let the British in the United Kingdom try to work the partnership all to their interest, and the '*bloated English colonials*' will be the first to start and organise opposition.

¹ This I have already declared to MR. ARTHUR HAWKES, in an interview and a letter published in the *Toronto Star*, July 14 and 15, 1916, and reproduced in pamphlet form under the title: "*Canadian Nationalism and the War*."

Just as we may count upon the Indians to counteract the effort of pan-anglo-saxonism, from the Anglo-Saxons in the colonies we may likewise expect full resistance to the encroachments of Anglo-Saxons from the United Kingdom.

Conclusion

In conclusion, let us keep in mind the opening of this short study, borrowed from the pen of the Colonial Secretary: "*After this war, the relations between the Dominions and the Mother Country can never be the same again.*" The new order will be, to a large extent, what the people of Canada and the other Dominions "*finally insist*" on making it. At present, we are allegedly fighting for the liberation of various peoples in Europe, for the preservation or revival of small nationalities, and also for the general progress of freedom and democracy throughout the world. Are we to deny those boons to ourselves, and to our children?

To remain in our present state of disguised servitude is not mere stagnation: it is retrogression, it is abdication; it means voluntary acceptance of an Imperial burden heavier than that which weighed on the conquered provinces of Rome.

To demand and acquire equal rights of partnership within the Empire would mark *some* progress.

To become a nation, free to live its own life, to shape its own destinies, would be the attainment of the only goal high and *lasting* enough to satisfy *all* the aspirations of a free, robust and spirited people.

Date Due

DEC 13 1979		
OCT 2 1979	JAN 22 1979	
	NOV 2 1979	
FEB 5 1977	NOV 19 2001	
NOV 1 1976		
DEC 18 1978	DEC 12 1994	
DEC 22 1979	DEC 12 1994	
OCT 17 1979	DEC 08 1999	
DEC 1 1999	DEC 06 1999	
FEB 04 1991	NOV 28 2001	
DEC 04 2003	DEC 10 2003	
DEC 16 2004	DEC 18 2004	

PRO
BART

CAT. NO. 23 233

PRINTED IN U.S.A.

JN 276 .B7
Bourassa, Henri, 1868-195
Independence or Imperial partn 010101



0 1163 0196970 9
TRENT UNIVERSITY

JN276 .B7

Bourassa, Henri

...Independence or imperial
partnership?

DATE

ISSUED TO

Bourassa, H.

005904

Bro-I
INDUSTRI

Newark ■ Los

